

Battle Through the Heavens

(斗破苍穹)

Chapter

400-499

Tian Can Tu Dou

(天蚕土豆)

Story Description:

In a land where no magic is present. A land where the strong makes the rules and weak has to obey. A land filled with alluring treasures and beauty yet also filled with unforeseen danger. Xiao Yan, who has shown talents none had seen in decades, suddenly three years ago lost everything, his powers, his reputation, and his promise to his mother. What sorcery has caused him to lose all of his powers? And why has his fiancée suddenly shown up?

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Chapter 400: Xiao Yan Benefits from Two Forces Fighting

A group of red shadows, like a raging flood, whizzed past the forest. Their dense, bloody, aura caused some of the low ranked Magical Beasts, which were out looking for food, to fear coming any closer. They could only use their frightened gazes from afar as they watched the group of people as they ran pass.

A short while after that group of red-colored humans had rushed past, another black-colored shadow leaped and appeared from in between the trees. His body flashed and stopped at a tree branch before lifting his head, overlooking the red-colored group of people who had their heads lowered as they ran wildly. He could not resist frowning. In a soft voice, he said, "If I continue to delay like this, Fan Lao might really come chasing..."

Xiao Yan mused slightly, clenched his teeth and said quietly, "If there is no opportunity to strike, then I can only forcefully create one."

Once he said this, Xiao Yan's feet gently pressed against the branch. His body gently drifted down before his body continued to follow the group in front.

Two groups with a great disparity in numbers rushed through the mountain forest, with one at the front and the other trailing behind. The distance between them did not exceed a hundred meters.

Xiao Yan remained close behind the group in front, quietly counting the time in his heart. It continued in this manner for a couple of minutes before he finally could not endure any longer. His feet violently stepped on a tree branch. His speed had just soared when he suddenly realized that Fan Ling's group in front had actually stopped. His heart leaped as he quietly reduced his speed and sneakily landed on a tree branch before he carefully approached.

In an empty clearing within the forest, Fan Ling waved his hand and reduced the speed of the group. His face was solemn as he watched a

Blood Guard in front whom he had sent to scout ahead. He coldly asked, "Is there some activity in front?"

"Junior Sect Leader, there are signs of people on the mountain path in that direction. After careful investigation, it appears to be people from the 'Black Skeleton Tomb'." The Blood Guard knelt on one knee as he respectfully reported.

"Black Skeleton Tomb?" Fan Ling's expression changed slightly as he heard this. He asked, "Have we also been stopped? How did they come to know of our whereabouts?"

"Junior Sect Leader, looking at their manner, it does not appear that they are ambushing us. Instead, they appear to be searching for a remote mountain path and using it to hurry back to Skull City..." The experienced Blood Guard hesitated a little before speaking.

"Oh? Hei, after buying the Di class Dou Skill, they are looking for a small, remote path to quietly hurry back to Skull City. This does match those fellows' characters quite well..." Fan Ling's eyes narrowed. He recalled that the 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement' Agility Type Dou Technique, which he coveted greatly was in their grasp. A fiery desire that he had difficulty restraining suddenly rose within his heart. His gaze swept around him as he suddenly asked, "How many people do they have?"

"Exactly ten of them."

"Is that fellow Hui Ku among them?" Fan Ling quickly followed with another question. The Hui Ku he had just spoken of was the gray-robed, middle-aged man who had fought with him for the 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement' at the auction fair yesterday.

"Yes, he is. According to this subordinate's judgement, the other party should have two strong Dou Lings and two Da Dou Shis. The remainder is of them are of the Dou Shi class." The Blood Guard solemnly replied.

"Two Dou Lings, two Da Dou Shis huh..." Fan Ling softly muttered to himself. A long while later, a greed and savage smile flashed across his narrowed eyes. With a wave of his hand, he said in a dark and cold manner, "Increase our speed, catch up with the people from the 'Black

Skeleton Tomb'. Originally, I did not plan to have any ideas about this matter, but it so happens that they themselves chose to take this small mountain path. They should not blame this young master for having a black heart..."

"Junior Sect Leader, the Sect Leader said that the most important mission we have now is to send the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' back to Mu Zhi City. If any issues were to appear, it might be very disadvantageous to us." Seeing that Fan Ling was actually planning to stop the people from the Black Skeleton Tomb, the old man, who had been following beside him, could not help but hurriedly advise against it.

"Elder Luo, you need not worry. The other party is far weaker than us whether it is in terms of numbers or overall strength of the group. It is worthwhile for us to take this risk for a Di class Dou Technique." Fan Ling spread his hand and spoke faintly.

"This..." Elder Luo hesitated for a moment when he heard this. He exchanged glances with another old man by his side and then looked at Fan Ling, whose face was filled with determination. He could only helplessly nod his head.

"When that time comes, I will need to trouble you two Elders to hold off the other party's Dou Lings. I will lead the Blood Guards to finish off the other people from the 'Black Skeleton Tomb'. This time around, it will be the same as what we did with the people from the 'Sky Serpent Mansion'. We must not let even half a person sneak away!" Fan Ling coldly said. His killing style was resolute without the slightest hesitation and could be considered a figure of power. However, he was just a little too greedy.

As Fan Ling's voice fell, the group of Blood Guards nodded quietly without emitting even the slightest bit of complaint or rejection.

Fan Ling nodded with satisfaction. He waved his hand and led at the front as they charged into the forest.

Not long after Fan Ling and the others disappeared, Xiao Yan's body appeared on top of a large tree. He eyed the spot where the former's group had disappeared from, and a strange smile surfaced on his face. In a soft

voice, he said, "What an overly greedy fellow. When he sees something good, he just wants to snatch it... but this time around, you are destined to be robbed."

Xiao Yan laughed softly as his body drifted down from the large tree before turning into a black shadow which leaped into the forest.

Xiao Yan's figure drifted within the forest. Around ten minutes later, he suddenly slowed and hid his body behind a large tree. He tilted his head and threw his gaze out.

At this moment, on an empty ground which was merely tens of meters away, over ten Blood Guards enwrapped by bloody auras formed a circle, surrounding a few people with black-colored skulls sewn onto their robes. From the looks of the mess on the ground and the wounds on their bodies, it was clear that both parties had already been engaged in an explosive battle during the short amount of time earlier.

At a spot not far from the battle circle, there were another two small battlegrounds. Four human figures intertwined with one another. The sharp weapons in their hands carried a ferocious force as they violently hacked at each other. Occasionally, the glint from the knives and the aura of a sword would strike air, and the enormous rock or large trees by their sides would be directly sliced apart. From this, one could see that both parties were really engaged in a life or death battle and did not have any intention of simply sparring.

"Have they already started fighting..." Xiao Yan's gaze swept across the messy empty ground. He then glanced at the two small battleground. A grey-robed, middle-aged man among them was shockingly the person from the 'Black Skeleton Tomb' during the auction fair yesterday.

"The people from the 'Black Skeleton Tomb' are not able to endure being attacked like the 'Sky Serpent Mansion'..." As Xiao Yan muttered in his heart, the Blood Guards, whose entire bodies were surrounded by a bloody aura had once again began to attack. The bloody scent that came rushing over nearly caused people to vomit. Under over ten shining blood knives, the eight people from the 'Black Skeleton Tomb', with the exception of the

two Da Dou Shis, who were gritting their teeth and enduring, were directly hacked to death by the chaotic knives. Their deaths were extremely miserable.

“Xiu!”

A dark, black, cold arrow sudden shot out explosively. The cold arrow carried a dense bloody aura as it violently pierced into the throat of a Da Dou Shi in a lightning-like manner. The enormous force contained in it directly caused the arrow to passed through the man’s throat and exit from the back before finally nailing itself firmly into a tree trunk. The tail of the arrow quivered swiftly.

Xiao Yan’s gaze swept across the direction where the arrow was shot out from. The person who had attacked was actually Fan Ling, who was holding a longbow in his hand. At this moment, he had once again raised his bow after killing one Da Dou Shi and targeted the other Da Dou Shi from a distance.

Seeing that Fan Ling was pointing the arrow at him, the expression of the other Da Dou Shi changed drastically. Dou Qi surged wildly within his body. In an instant, it agglomerated and formed a somewhat crude Dou Qi armor on the surface of his body. From the looks of this Dou Qi armor, the strength of this Da Dou Shi was likely around two or three stars.

“Hei, you want to block my ‘Blood Eclipse Arrow’ with just that broken Dou Qi armor?” Fan Ling could not help but laugh coldly when he saw the Da Dou Shi’s action. He pulled the bowstring back and released his finger. An arrow that was covered by a blood-colored energy, shot out with explosive force. It turned into a bloody glow that violently collided with that Dou Qi armor in a lightning-like manner. A ‘crunch’, that would make one’s face sour, immediately rang out.

The crunching sound did not last for very long before it was abruptly stopped. This was because the blood-colored arrow actually corroded a small hole in that Dou Qi armor. The arrow then drilled into the throat of that Da Dou Shi through the hole...

Fan Ling indifferently eyed the Da Dou Shi who had collapsed softly on

the ground. He then watched the final attack of these two Da Dou Shi just before their deaths, killing nearly ten Blood Guards. His heart could not help but feel a little pain. It was not easy to groom these Blood Guards...

“Fortunately, there is the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’ as compensation...” Fan Ling repeated in his heart. Only then did he feel a little better. He tilted his head and eyed the other two strong Dou Lings of the ‘Black Skeleton Tomb’ in two other areas, who were being held back by the two Elders until they were unable to move. In a faint voice, he said, “Mo-er Han. Hand over the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’. If you comply with my demands, I will leave you with an intact corpse.”

The expression of the middle-aged man called Mo-er Han was dark and solemn as he dodged the attack from his opponent in front of him. His voice was hoarse as he said, “Fan Ling, you will regret this!”

Fan Ling laughed coldly as the bow and arrow in his hand swayed slightly and pointed at the strong Dou Ling. Blood aura was concentrated at the tip of the arrow and his eyes had tightly shrunk together at this moment. At a certain instance, he finally found an opening of the Dou Ling, which was forced out by the latter’s opponent. He relaxed his hand and the blood arrow shot out explosively. An instant later, an arrow violently shot into the chest of the strong Dou Ling.

“If I am to die, let’s die together!”

That strong Dou Ling from the ‘Black Skeleton Tomb’ was also extremely aggressive. Despite being struck by the cold arrow of Fan Ling until he was seriously injured with fresh blood being repeatedly spat out of his mouth, he threw away the weapon in his hand. He crazily withstood the intense pain of having his hand being cut off by his opponent’s knife as he used his other hand to tightly wrap around his opponent. His face was ferocious as he cried out loud, “Bone Explosion!”

“Elder Han, quickly pull back!” Fan Ling’s expression changed and hurriedly cried out when he saw that the face of the strong person from the ‘Black Skeleton Tomb’ had suddenly turned into a bizarre green and purple.

“Bang!”

Fan Ling’s warning had just fell when that strong Dou Ling suddenly exploded. The strong energy ripples from the explosion removed nearly half a foot of soil from the surrounding ground. That strong Dou Ling from the Blood Sect had also been blasted by the explosion until his clothes were tattered and his skin broken, revealing the flesh inside. His face was pale as he hung on by only a breath.

“Damn it!” Seeing Elder Han, who had kept his life, but temporarily lost his fighting ability, Fan Ling let out a furious curse. He waved his hand and said in a dark and cold voice, “Blood Guards, listen up, surround and kill Mo-er Han!”

“Yes!” As Fan Ling’s orders fell, the remaining twenty plus Blood Guards lifted their long knives which had traces of blood that had yet to dry. After which, they carried a bloody aura all over their bodies as they surrounded and attacked Mo-er Han.

Surrounding and killing and being surrounded and killed. This brutality was happening on this empty plot of land.

A strong Dou Ling was keeping Mo-er Han in check in front as tens of strong Blood Guards were attacking from all around and he needed to be careful of the cold arrows from Fan Ling who was outside the encirclement. By being forced to be distracted to such extremes, an opening was forced out by the Elder Luo after merely enduring for a couple of minutes. Although he had also risked his life to strike back and caused the Elder Luo to be badly wounded, he was also struck by the latter’s ferocious palm and completely fainted.

“Pooh...”

That person called Elder Luo held his chest and exhaled a couple of long breaths. He spat out a mouthful of fresh blood. As he glanced at the Blood Guards, where only ten remained, as well as the heavily wounded Elder Han, he could not help but smile bitterly and shook his head. He did not expect that the people of the ‘Black Skeleton Tomb’ were this fierce and unafraid to die. What a bitter fight...

Seeing that Mo-er Han was finally unconscious, Fan Ling, who was pulling his bowstring outside the battleground, finally heaved a sigh of relief. He carelessly put aside the bow and arrow in his hand and swiftly walked forward. He then randomly snatched a long knife from the hands of a Blood Guard before fiercely hacking Mo-er Han's neck with a ferocious face, completely finishing him off.

He flicked the tip of the knife gently and lifted the storage ring on Mo-er Han's hand. Fan Ling hurriedly flipped everything within it. A long while later, a wild joy that was difficult to hide swarmed onto his face. He shook his hand and an ancient silver-colored scroll appeared in his other.

"Ha ha, the 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement' has landed in my hands. Once I successfully practice it, what can a strong Dou Wang do to me? Ha ha!" Fan Ling held the scroll tightly and could not resist facing the sky and laughing crazily.

Just as Fan Ling had forgotten himself and laughed wildly, a suction force suddenly appeared out of nowhere. That silver-colored scroll instantly flew out, and was finally carelessly grabbed by a long arm.

"Ke ke, thank you very much for your hardwork Junior Sect Leader Fan Ling. However, it is better for me to take custody of this technique."

A black-robed man strangely appeared on a tree branch. That silver-colored Di class Dou Technique scroll was reflecting with a faint luster under the sunlight.

Chapter 401: The First Change of the Sky

Fire Three Mysterious Change: Green Lotus Change!

From the moment that he obtained the silver-colored scroll until it had been snatched away had only been a split second apart. After hearing that mocking laughter appear, Fan Ling finally recovered from the change that had suddenly appeared. His expression suddenly darkened as he slowly lifted his head. His gaze was dense as he eyed the black-robed person on the tree branch. After seeing the familiar dressing, which he had seen at the auction ground before, he could not help but be startled. He immediately said in a dark and cold voice, "It's you?"

When Fan Ling spoke, the remaining ten plus Blood Guards in the battleground, who still had some combat strength began flashing aside with great teamwork. Coincidentally, they surrounded the black-robed man within their encirclement. Elder Luo's face was also dark and cold. His pair of icy eyes were filled with killing intent. Regardless of the intention of this person, this person must definitely not leave this place alive, since he had clashed with their operation.

"Ke ke, Junior Sect Leader Fan Ling, we meet again." The delicate and handsome face under the black robe was lifted into a mocking smile. Xiao Yan played with the silver-colored scroll in his hand, and was unconcerned of the Blood Guards who had completely surrounded him as he laughed softly.

"Hand over the scroll and I will leave your corpse in one piece." The long knife in Fan Ling's hand, which was as bright as liquid blood, was pointed at Xiao Yan. The dark and solemn words of Fan Ling had dark, cold killing intent gushing out from them.

Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders. Not only did he ignore Fan Ling, but he also flicked his hand and the silver-colored scroll in his hand was rotated and stored into his storage ring.

“Good, good!”

The corner of Fan Ling’s mouth twitched when he saw Xiao Yan’s action. An angry green surged up onto Fan Ling’s pale white face. The two words, which contained a sharp killing intent, were spat out from his mouth one after the other.

At the moment when these two words of Fan Ling rung out, the ten plus Blood Guards surrounding Xiao Yan suddenly cried out fiercely in unison. Dense, dark, blood-colored Dou Qi overflowed from their bodies, and finally wrapped around the entire long knives in their hands. Their feet abruptly stepped against the tree branches and the ten plus human figures shot explosively towards Xiao Yan.

The corner of Xiao Yan’s eyes swept over the Blood Guards, who had rushed over and attacked from all directions. He slowly extended his hand and held the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler hidden on the back of the black robe. He closed his eyes slightly and sensed the thick, cold force which was becoming increasingly close. A moment later, he suddenly opened his eyes, and a powerful force erupted from his body. An enormous black shadow, carrying a pressuring force, immediately lifted the black robe cover. It was like a black-colored wind wheel with Xiao Yan in the center as it began spreading out wildly.

“Clang, clang, clang...”

Any place where the black-colored wind wheel passed, sparks flew in all directions. Those long knives within the Blood Guards hands were actually shaken by the force contained in it until they fell from the their hands. Only a small number of Blood Guards, whose strength were a little stronger, were barely able to keep their weapons in their hands. However, that was on the precondition that the gap on their hand, between their thumb and their index finger, convulsed until they cracked.

The rotating feet suddenly paused and correspondingly, the black-colored wind wheel also disappeared. Xiao Yan lifted his head and watched those Blood Guards who had charged less than half a meter forward, but still had fierce faces. The corner of his mouth was lifted into

a cold smile. His feet abruptly stepped on the tree trunk and following an explosion of energy, his body turned into a lightning-fast black shadow. He passed between the attack of the ten plus Blood Guards.

“Bang, bang...”

As his body shuttled past, muffled sounds repeatedly rang out. Each time a muffled sound was emitted, there would be a Blood Guard who would vomit out fresh blood and fall into the dense branches before smashing heavily into the ground. They would struggle a couple of times, but they all ended up collapsing powerlessly.

Fan Ling raised his head and watched the lightning sharp battle in midair. That originally dark and chilly face of his had suddenly become much calmer at this moment. His toes gently lifted a bloodied long knife from the ground. He extended his hand and held it tightly within it. He tore off his clothes readily and slowly wiped the traces of blood off the knife. In an indifferent voice, he said, “Around a four star Da Dou Shi... with this little strength, he still dares to snatch food from my mouth. He is really bold and prideful.”

“Elder Luo, let me handle this person. You stay over there. Stop him should he plan to flee.”

“Yes, Junior Sect Leader, be careful.”

The old man by the side nodded slightly. He lifted the other Elder Han, who had temporarily lost his combat ability, and took a couple of steps back. From the way Xiao Yan attacked the Blood Guards earlier, he had also roughly seen through Xiao Yan’s strength. In terms of strength and agility, this black-robed person was much stronger than the Da Dou Shis of the ‘Black Skeleton Tomb’ earlier. However, regardless of how one put it, he was still merely a Da Dou Shi. Fan Ling, on the other hand, was already a genuine Dou Ling!

“Bang!” The last Blood Guard was also smashed out of the air. Fresh blood covered his face as he gradually shut his eyes one last time.

Following the defeat of the final Blood Guard, Xiao Yan’s body gradually descended. He tilted the heavy ruler in his hand and bright red fresh blood

followed the body of the ruler as it gradually dripped down.

“I think that the reason for you following us all the way should be because of that map fragment, right?” Fan Ling randomly threw aside his clothes, which had been contaminated by blood, as he suddenly asked in a faint voice.

The heavy ruler trembled slightly. That young and delicate face under the black robe suddenly had an additional coldness.

“Hee hee, looks like this young master’s luck is quite good to actually be able to obtain a treasure by stumbling across it accidentally. Since you are so concerned about it, I think that it should not be an ordinary thing. Once I return home, I will let father study it carefully. With his experience, he should be able to get some clues about that map fragment.” Although Xiao Yan’s action was extremely slight, it was still caught by Fan Ling, who had been paying careful attention to him. Fan Ling could not resist laughing coldly upon his find.

“You might not have this opportunity...” A calm voice was transmitted out from under the black robe. A green Dou Qi swiftly seeped out from within Xiao Yan’s body before wrapping around it.

“Is that so? I have seen too many boors like you, whose reasoning has been occupied by the treasures in the ‘Black-Corner Region’! However, their final endings do not appear to be any good.” Fan Ling lifted his eyebrows and emitted a dark, cold laugh. The dark, chilly, blood-colored Dou Qi also slowly surged out of Fan Ling’s body. A bloody scent immediately permeated the air.

As the bloody scent permeated the place, Fan Ling’s back became slightly bent. He was like a ferocious beast which had discovered its prey. Blood traces gradually surfaced in his eyes, giving his appearance a certain wild, beastly aura.

Fan Ling’s feet were inserted deep into the ground. At a certain instance, a low roar was abruptly emitted from Fan Ling’s throat. He stomped his feet and his body was like an arrow that had left a bow. In an instant, he appeared in front of Xiao Yan. The sharp long knife in his hand, which

was cloaked in blood-colored Dou Qi, carried a sharp sound of air being sliced as it viciously hacked downward.

This powerful strike of Fan Ling resulted in an unceasing ear-piercing sonic boom blasting through the air.

The enormous black ruler abruptly came forward. The green-colored Dou Qi on it was as dense as a thick viscous liquid. After which, it collided heavily with the blood knife.

“Bang!”

The sound of metal colliding sounded and a large amount of sparks spluttered. A mixture of green and red, twin-colored energy ripples spread out from the point of contact between the knife and the ruler. It directly and violently cut half a foot of soil from the ground, where both parties stood.

The soil flew all over and filled the sky. Xiao Yan felt his nearly numb arms and his face under the black robe changed slightly. His opponent was indeed worthy of being a strong Dou Ling. This strength was an unknown number of times stronger than a Da Dou Shi. It was just... why does this fellow's Dou Qi have a sort of thin feeling to it?

With Xiao Yan's strength, he might be able to contend with a strong Dou Ling for a few exchanges without using any Dou Techniques but he would greatly exhaust his Dou Qi. However, the attack from Fan Ling earlier, which appeared to be incomparably fierce, was not as strong as Xiao Yan had expected.

“This fellow has such great strength...” As the knife and the ruler came into contact, the legs of Fan Ling and Xiao Yan fought a few battles with one another in a lightning-like manner. After which, the other party's heavy ruler fell crosswise and they took a couple of steps back. Fan Ling felt the faint pain remaining in his feet and could not help but feel a little shock in his heart.

“What father had said is indeed true. Although our Blood Sect's Qi Method is overbearing and bizarre, it is overly reliant on external strength. This results in the Dou Qi within one's body to be unable to reach a

condensated state. It is a little disadvantageous when fighting with others. However, it is fortunate that this fellow is only of the Da Dou Shi's class. It is not difficult to finish him off." A thought quickly flashed across Fan Ling's heart. He suddenly threw the weapon in his hand aside. The originally pale-white face of his had also become strangely bright red. Following this change, a blood color swiftly surfaced on his palms. It finally seeped into his palm thread by thread. In merely the blink of an eye, a pair of blood palms, similar to the ones which Fan Lao had used earlier to kill Elder Qing, appeared on Fan Ling's hands.

"No matter who you are, you already do not have the slightest chance to regret your choice today! However, in order to thank you for bringing me the good news that the map fragment has a secret value, I will let you become a shrivelled corpse after you die!"

A bloody stench that caused people to want to puke was repeatedly emitted from both palms. Fan Ling lifted his head and gave Xiao Yan a dense smile. His foot suddenly pushed off the ground and his body turned into a bloody mist which immediately shot explosively toward Xiao Yan. As he waved his palm, the blood mist basically filled the sky and land all around them.

"Bone Transforming Bloody Evil Palm?"

Seeing that Fan Ling's palms had transformed into fresh blood covered strange palms, the two Blood Sect Elders outside the battleground could not help but be startled. They exchanged gazes and said, "It is really unexpected that the Sect Leader has even taught the Junior Sect Leader this kind of Dou Technique. It can be considered that the black-robed person has collided into the tip of a spear by himself."

"Hei, he deserves it. He dares to rob something belonging to our Blood Sect. If it was me instead, I would drain all of his blood while he is still alive." The Elder Han who had lost his combat ability laughed evilly.

The pair of dark black eyes under the black robe stared intently at the blood-colored fog which had shot out forcefully. He sniffed the bloody stench that had spread all over. His outstanding Spiritual Perception of his

caused Xiao Yan to clearly sense the ferocious force of the blood palms within the blood-colored fog.

“Little fellow. Be careful. Your current strength is no match for a strong Dou Ling.” Yao Lao’s reminder sounded in Xiao Yan’s heart.

“That may not be true.”

Xiao Yan laughed softly. He actually slowly closed his eyes. In the Acceptance Spirit within the middle of the vortex in his body, wisps of green-colored flames began spurting out like a volcano. Finally, it followed a mysterious and strange path as it began swiftly circulating within his body.

“You are thinking of...”

Following the strange circulation of the green-colored flame, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes closed, suddenly and faintly felt a powerful energy that was filled with a wildness swiftly seep out from all parts of his body as the flame circulated!

The bloody scent that filled the air came pouncing at him. The dark and cold force within the bloody mist had instantaneously reached Xiao Yan’s body.

However, just as the bloody fog was about to wrap Xiao Yan’s body within it, the eyes under the black robe suddenly opened. A green-colored flame shot explosively from his eyes. A powerful force, that was not weaker than anyone present in the battle ground, suddenly surged out from Xiao Yan’s body.

Xiao Yan’s hands were extended out of the black robe in a lightning-like manner and a green-colored flame was shrouded over it. As a thundering roar sounded within his heart, his palms carried a fiery force that could move mountains and flip the seas as it heavily struck outward toward the bloody fog in front of him.

“The First Change of the Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change: Green Lotus Change!”

Chapter 402: Reward!

“Boom!”

A pair of bloody palms and a green-colored fire palm heavily smashed against each other within the bloody fog. A frightening air wave suddenly spread out from both of their hands, causing the two Blood Sect's elder, who were off to the side, to have no choice but to swiftly pull back as their expressions changed slightly.

There was only a momentary silence after the two palms collided within the bloody fog, before a shrill voice that contained some fear sounded, “Fire? Dammit, you actually possess a ‘Heavenly Flame’?”

“Boom!”

The shrill voice had just fallen when another wave of hot air spread out from within the bloody fog. As the air wave rolled, the bloody fog, which shrouded the air and land, was directly grilled by the hot air until it became much thinner.

“Glug...”

The sound of blood being vomited suddenly sounded within the gradually thinning bloody fog. Quickly following this, a shadow stuck close to the ground as it shot out from the bloody fog. His feet left a deep, nearly ten meter long scar in the ground before he finally collided heavily into a tree trunk. His shoulders shook and the tree trunk was immediately smashed into two.

With his back leaning against the tree trunk, the legs of the human figure became feeble and his body collapsed. His hands supported himself on the ground as blood began dripping down from the corner of his mouth. The hoarse, hurried sound of breathing was heard repeatedly, much like a bellow.

“Junior Sect Leader!” The gazes of the two Blood Sect's elders shot toward the human figure, who was in extremely dire straits. Their faces changed drastically as they suddenly cried out involuntarily. They had

never expected that Fan Ling would be turned into such a miserable state by a person, whose strength was merely that of a Da Dou Shi, after he had used such a vicious and strange Dou Technique like the 'Bone Transforming Bloody Evil Palm'.

Fan Ling's entire body trembled as he stood up from the ground. He lowered his head and eyed his charred hands. Shock involuntarily flashed across his pale face. He let out a couple of intense coughs as he raised his head and swept his gaze toward the gradually thinning bloody mist.

Following the silence of the three of them, this area also descended into a quiet atmosphere. A moment later, however, the sound of footsteps slowly sounded from the faint blood mist, causing the expressions of the three of them to completely change.

The sound of footsteps gradually became louder and clearer. The bloody fog also quietly disappeared. A human figure, which was completely wrapped in a green-colored flame, appeared in the sight of the three of them.

As they eyed the human figure, whose entire body was wrapped by the green flame and sensed the hot breath faintly seeping out, the two Elders of the Blood Sect sensed that the Dou Qi in their body began to be a little clogged up as it circulated. Their eyes shrunk immediately as they involuntarily let out a shocked cry, "On his body... is a 'Heavenly Flame'?"

The Blood Sect's Qi Method was rather unorthodox and purposefully took the dark and cold route. The flame element and everything about it was the other's natural allelopathy. Of course, this mutual subjugation was merely with regards to a normal fire type Dou Qi. If they were to meet a natural flame of the earth and heavens, such as a 'Heavenly Flame', it would be like a mouse meeting a cat. This kind of meeting meant absolute suppression, where there was not the slightest counter force...

In the first rule of the Blood Sect, it writes that if they met a strong person with a 'Heavenly Flame', they should swiftly withdraw! From this, it could be seen to what extent the Qi Method of the Blood Sect would be suppressed by the 'Heavenly Flame'. Moreover, when a person of the

Blood Sect was to fight with a person possessing a 'Heavenly Flame', they would have difficulty displaying even fifty or sixty percent of their combat abilities.

It was however fortunate that there were not many people in this world who possessed a 'Heavenly Flame'. Therefore, the people of the Blood Sect had rarely met any strong people possessing a 'Heavenly Flame'. This time around, on the other hand, Fan Ling's group was destined to be very unlucky.

The green-colored flame shrouding Xiao Yan's body was lessened slightly, revealing a delicate and handsome face, which was so young that it left one speechless. He eyed the shocked faces of the three men and smiled slightly. However, that smile contained a faint chilliness.

"Who exactly are you? Why do you want to go against our Blood Sect? As long as you withdraw, I will use the name of the Junior Sect Leader of the Blood Sect to swear that I will definitely not pursue this matter." Fan Ling stood up and struggled to gather together with the two Elders as he cried out loud.

"You want to delay until Fan Lao hurries over?" Xiao Yan's smile was bright, but it hid an icy coldness. In one sentence, he revealed Fan Ling's goal.

Fan Ling's expression changed slightly when he heard this. His eyes stared intently at the face, which was much younger than his. He had difficulty imagining how, at such a young age, did the other party possess that kind of terrifying 'Heaven Flame', which even his father was afraid of, as well as an extraordinary mind.

"Junior Sect Leader, leave first. I will hold him back! With the Sect Leader's strength, I think he should have settled the matter with Elder Qing from the 'Sky Serpent Mansion'. As long as we delay him for a while, we will be able to endure until the Sect Leader arrives!" Elder Luo, who still had some strength left, held a long knife in his hand. Although fear for the 'Heavenly Flame' filled his heart, he was the only one who had the ability to fight with the other party at this moment.

Fan Ling clenched his teeth as he heard Elder Luo's words. Without any hesitation, he dragged his injured body, turned around, and ran.

Seeing Fan Ling, who did not hesitate to turn and flee, Xiao Yan suddenly smiled. His body did not move.

Fan Ling turned around and ran for some distance. When he did not feel any fierce battle behind him, a doubt rose within his heart. This doubt had just surfaced when in the corner of his uncertain eyes he caught the flash of a seven-colored shadow.

The seven-colored shadow was gone from his eyes in a flash but it was not ignored by Fan Ling, who was like a bird on the edge. His feet were inserted into the ground, sliding and creating a scar in it. The speed at which he was rushing forward came to a halt. However, he did not discover anything when his gaze swept in all directions. He furrowed his brows. He was just about to continue fleeing when an intense pain, like that of a hole being drilled through his heart, was transmitted from his chest. Fan Ling slowly lowered his head and coincidentally saw a seven-colored shadow that entered through his back and penetrate through his chest.

After the seven-colored shadow penetrated through his chest, it turned into a small, seven-colored snake that was not even half a foot long under Fan Ling's very eyes. Fan Ling's eyes stared intently at the pair of bewitching and unusual snake eyes that belonged to the little snake. Fan Ling could not understand why it has broken through his Dou Ling's defence as though it was breaking through bean curd...

"I am about to die this time..." The intense pain that was transmitted from his chest caused Fan Ling's vision to gradually blur. Just as he was about to collapse, he forcefully twisted his head. His gaze passed through the gap in the forest and he coincidentally saw the green flame at that empty plot of land suddenly becoming more intense. He also heard two miserable shrill cries. Under the absolute suppression of the 'Heavenly Flame', the two Elders, one being slightly injured while the other being severely injured, could not possibly survive at the hands of Xiao Yan, whose strength had suddenly soared.

Fan Ling's body heavily smashed into the ground and his eyelids drooped slowly. He could faintly see a black robe. It slowly passed in between the trees and walked toward him.

Following the movement of the footsteps, the green-colored flame on Xiao Yan's body gradually withdrew back into him. That Qi, which was comparable to a strong Dou Ling was also quietly withdrawn at this moment.

Xiao Yan's footsteps stopped in front of Fan Ling's corpse. His Qi had once again returned to the strength of a Da Dou Shi, while his expression was somewhat pale. He coughed fiercely for a couple of times as he lowered his head and eyed his slightly burnt hand caused by the overly strong energy. With an involuntarily bitter laugh, he whispered, "This 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' strength is indeed quite good. Unfortunately, the damage it causes to the body is also quite great..."

"It is really unexpected that you have really successfully learned one of the changes among the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change'. It is just that you are still not proficient in using it to its fullest potential. Otherwise, you would only be slightly worn out and such injuries would, at the very least, not appear." Yao Lao's somewhat strange voice sounded in Xiao Yan's heart. He felt quite shocked that Xiao Yan had managed to grope the manner to use the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' within one month.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He returned the 'Heaven Swallowing Python' back into his sleeve and lowered his body to remove the storage ring on Fan Ling's finger. After which, he swiftly searched within it and took out a cold jade box.

Xiao Yan's mouth felt somewhat dry as he eyed the cold jade box in his hand, the value of which could be called terrifying. Even with his mental strength, his heart had also began pounding hard at this moment.

After he inhaled a deep breath of air, Xiao Yan did not open the cold jade box. Instead, he threw it into his own storage ring. After which, he began flipping the inside of the storage ring wildly. A moment later, an ancient map fragment flashed and appeared.

When he pulled open the map fragment, the familiar lines, as well as that half of a demonic and unique drawing, appeared in Xiao Yan's sight.

"I have finally gotten ahold of it..." Xiao Yan held the map fragment as excitement surged onto his face. He carefully stored the map into his storage ring and let out a long breath.

"Little fellow, hurry up and leave. I have sensed the Qi of Fan Lao!" Xiao Yan had just stored the map fragment when Yao Lao's voice urgently sounded.

Xiao Yan's heart abruptly tightened. However, just as he was about to turn around, his body suddenly paused. He turned around once again and viciously struck Fan Ling's head. Only when he heard the sound of bones shattering did he feel completely reassured. His body turned into a black shadow which charged into the dense woods.

About ten minutes after Xiao Yan had disappeared, a red-colored figure flashed past in the sky of this part of the mountain forest. A moment later, his body appeared to have suddenly stiffened as he stared at an empty plot of land.

His expression was extremely dark and cold as he eyed the corpse on the empty land. The red shadow flashed and descended, landing on the empty ground. His gaze swept over the bodies of the Blood Guards one at a time. Finally, his eyes shrunk abruptly as they stopped on the corpses of over ten people whose clothes had a skull sewn on it. A creaking sound appeared as he clenched his fist tightly.

The gaze of the red figure swept over the corpses all over the places, but he did not find the one which he had wanted to find. He began to look around hurriedly and a moment later, his body turned into a blurry red shadow and charged into the dense forest.

The red shadow suddenly paused within the dense forest. His entire body trembled as he eyed a corpse on the ground. Suddenly, he raised his head and let out a vicious roar with a pale face.

After roaring for a while, the roar finally began to gradually disappear. Fan Lao hurriedly walked closer to Fan Ling's corpse. The glint of blood

grew dense in his hand as he covered Fan Ling's head. Following the sign of the blood glow, a strange drop of liquid blood suddenly began to seep out from the back of Fan Ling's head and finally surfaced in front of Fan Lao.

Fan Lao's face was filled with a cold, dark enmity. He waved his hand and the liquid blood burst apart, turning into a tiny blood screen. Within that blood screen, a human figure, whose entire body was covered by a green-colored flame, partially surfaced. Due to the blood screen being too thin, however, Fan Lao was unable to clearly see the exact appearance of the human figure.

"Bang..." The blood screen continued for half a minute before it suddenly burst apart.

"Black Skeleton Tomb... good..."

Fan Lao slowly bent his body and carried the corpse of Fan Ling. After which, he walked out of the dense woods with a dim expression. That voice, which was filled with so much enmity that it caused people to shudder, slowly reverberated in that place.

"No matter who it is, as long as I find out who did this, I will definitely let him suffer the pain of having his flesh cut off by ten thousand knives!"

Chapter 403: Swallowing The Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill!

A black shadow suddenly flashed past a dense mountain forest. Occasionally, the black robe would collide with a tree branch, which grew wildly, causing the black robe to be lifted slightly to reveal a delicate and handsome young face. It was that of Xiao Yan, who was fleeing after killing Fan Ling's group and obtaining the treasures.

Seemingly because he was worried that someone would discover his footprints and other small clues if he were to run on the surface, Xiao Yan had chosen to leap from tree branch to tree branch ever since he had left the place where he had performed the act. Even when he occasionally landed on the ground, he would carefully cover his footprint and other things.

Xiao Yan borrowed the cover of the dense thicket of the forest. Although he had sensed a presence, which contained an incomparable dark chillness and killing intent flying past him in the sky when he was fleeing, he was able to hide his Qi with the help of Yao Lao. Therefore, he was not discovered by the furious Fan Lao during his journey, where he was doing his best to flee. He was really quite lucky.

After an entire day and night of fleeing with all his strength, Xiao Yan had finally thrown the 'Black Mark City' into the distance. At this moment, even if Fan Lao had the ability to communicate with the heavens, he would definitely not be able to seek Xiao Yan out in this place, which was a couple of hundred kilometers away.

The black shadow suddenly shot out from within the forest and onto the back of a cliff with a pernicious slope. After which, he steadily landed on a huge rock on the edge of the cliff. After an entire day of fleeing, the black robe had become slightly dirty and messy. He lifted the Doupeng off his head and revealed the face of a young man, who had once again recovered his energy after resting for an entire night.

TL: Doupeng – a hat with a cloth to cover one's face.

Xiao Yan stood at the edge of the cliff and inhaled a deep breath of air that contained a thin mist. That little tiredness, which remained, had finally completely disappeared. He eyed the path below the mountain cliff, which was like the meandering of earthworm. The corner of his mouth could not help but be lifted into a tiny arc. Closely following this, the smile became bigger and was finally transformed into a hearty laugh which resounded off the mountain cliffs for a long while.

This time around, Xiao Yan was like a canary with his reward far exceeding what he had expected. Originally, he merely wanted to obtain that map fragment. It was really unexpected that Fan Ling's group actually took the initiative to help him snatch other unique treasures like the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' and the 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement'. These two treasures, which created quite an extraordinary ripple even when placed in the entire Dou Qi Continent, had landed in Xiao Yan's hand in a somewhat comical fashion. This kind of thing was like a biscuit falling from the sky, causing the current Xiao Yan to have a trance-like feeling of being in a dream.

The laughter gradually dissipated. Xiao Yan's hand shook and an ancient map fragment appeared in his palm. Quickly following this, he tapped his finger gently on the storage ring. Another slightly larger map fragment and two other map fragments, which had been split from a single map by Hai Bodong the other time, flashed and appeared. His hands carefully put the three map fragments together and then eyed the large missing lower left corner. He could not help but laugh softly. It was really unexpected that in just a little over three years' time, three of the map fragments, which had scattered to unknown locations of the continent, had already landed in his hand. It must be said that he was really too lucky.

"It is fortunate that I had first obtained the map fragment which had the drawing of the 'Purifying Lotus Demon Flame' on it. Otherwise, it is likely that even teacher would not think of linking this map fragment to the 'Purifying Lotus Demon Flame', which is ranked third on the 'Heavenly Flame Ranking'. If we did not know the exact background of the map, even if we were to meet a similar map fragment in another place, it is

likely that we would not act like this now, risking the danger of being chased and killed by a strong Dou Huang and a large faction in order to snatch these map fragments...” Xiao Yan was a little absentminded for a while as he faced the map before he suddenly muttered, feeling a little fortunate.

After Xiao Yan rejoiced in his heart for a while, he carefully stored the map fragment. He flipped his hand and a cold jade box, that was emitting white colored mist, appeared.

Xiao Yan’s eyes stared directly at the cold jade box. His throat rolled slightly. That heart of his, which had originally already calmed down, once again began to pound intensely. Xiao Yan’s mental strength had become much weaker in front of this kind of unique treasure.

Xiao Yan’s hand slowly lifted the cover until a tiny gap was created. A thread of golden light shot out from within it. When he saw this, he quickly covered it again. That cautious manner of his was as though he were afraid that it would attract some strong person. After all, under the allure of a sky-high priced treasure like the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’, it was likely that many people, other than a very few strong people whose class had already reached a certain level, or people who had no desires, would have difficulty concealing the greed in their hearts and directly kill him to snatch the treasure. Moreover, those two kinds of people that wouldn’t bother with Xiao Yan were so few in this ‘Black-Corner Region’ that they could be ignored...

“Consume it. It is not safe to carry it with you...” A faint voice suddenly sounded from within Xiao Yan’s heart.

“Uh? What?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He could not recover his senses for a period of time.

“I said consume this ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill!’” Yao Lao could only helplessly repeat himself when he saw Xiao Yan looking as though his mind was blank.

“Here?” Xiao Yan’s face was stunned. This was a tier seven medicinal pill. He was supposed to consume it in this place which could not be

considered safe? When he consumed the ‘Three-Lines Green Spirit Pill’ in the past, he had to find a safe place where no one would disturb him in order to properly refine the medicinal strength.

“Don’t say any more nonsense. Eat it!” Yao Lao impatiently urged.

“ ... ”

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and could only nod his head. He carefully lifted the cover of the cold jade box. At the moment when the box was opened, he abruptly covered it with his palm. After which, his green-colored Dou Qi surged out and blocked the golden light, which was about to shoot into the sky.

Golden light roamed on the surface of the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ in his hand. Two tiny golden-colored divine dragons repeatedly circulated within the pill. A faint dragon roar seeped out from the medicinal pill. If one were to carefully listen, that slight dragon roar seemed to be hiding a certain strange magical strength. It was actually able to cause a person’s spirit to instantly tremble and become absent minded...

“Hu...”

Xiao Yan shook his head with all his might. When he looked at the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ once again, a little surprise could not help but appear in his eyes. It was indeed worthy of being a tier seven medicinal pill, possessing a strange energy which could influence one’s spirit. It was the first time that he had met a strange sound which could cause his spirit to fall into a trance since the start of his training...

Xiao Yan held the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ with his hand. He inhaled a deep breath of air and then suddenly popped it into his mouth. Before he had the time to chew, the golden pill had already turned into a hot flow, moving along his throat and pouring into his body.

The surging hot flow was like a flood that swarmed into his body from all directions. Xiao Yan tightly clenched his teeth and hurriedly sat cross-legged, waiting for the moment that the medicinal effect would erupt.

Not long after Xiao Yan sat cross-legged, however, the expected volatilization of the medicinal effect did not appear. That hot flow that was surging like flood waters was like a flow of water entering a sponge. It slowly dissipated within his body until it completely disappeared...

Xiao Yan's originally tightly shut eyes gradually opened. He looked up and down at his body. Not the slightest activity has occurred. His mouth involuntarily twitched as he said in an utterly discomfited voice, "Teacher... don't tell me that this damn 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' was fake? Why is it that there is not even the slightest reaction?"

"What reaction do you want? A golden glow to shine brightly all over your body? Then giving you such a great pain that you would rather die, just like the other medicinal pills which you have consumed in the past?"

Xiao Yan was dull. He helplessly said, "At the very least, there should be some sort of occurrence happening. The result of consuming the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' is just like drinking a cup of plain water... it is, at any rate, a tier seven medicinal pill."

"Didn't the auctioneer say during the auction fair... this 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' is not some medicinal pill used to raise one's strength. Its greatest use is to 'stand after breaking'... that medicinal strength has already penetrated into your body. If you are to really enter into the juncture between life and death in the future and are lucky enough to activate it, you will naturally be able to obtain benefits which you cannot even imagine. For now... just treat it as though you have drunk a cup of water." When Yao Lao saw Xiao Yan's depressed expression, he could not help but feel that it was a little ridiculous as he spoke.

"... Don't tell me that there isn't even the slightest benefit right now?" Xiao Yan was slightly relieved as he stood up from the ground. However, he was still somewhat unwilling to accept the situation as he asked once again.

"That is not entirely so..."

After hearing Xiao Yan's question, Yao Lao was silent for a while before speaking after some time, "This 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' has

already reached the stage where the pill has gathered a spirit. Moreover, the items used to refine it are the monster cores from the bodies two rank six dragon type Magical Beasts which have not yet been dead for more than seven days. Therefore, it contains some thin dragon aura. This is also why the dragon roar from within the medicinal pill would cause one to feel as though one's spirit is trembling.”

“Any person who has good luck and who has consumed the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ would have a small chance of receiving the thin dragon aura into their body. However, the chances of this happening are quite low. The Wind zun zhe, Gu Ling, did not obtain even a little of this ability from the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’...” When he reached this point, Yao Lao suddenly said, “If you want to try, you can repeatedly circulate the Dou Qi in your body. If there is a strange energy separating from the Dou Qi when the Dou Qi is being rapidly rotated, that means that the thin dragon aura within the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ has already been inherited by you...”

TL: zun zhe – used to refer to a Dou Zun

“What benefit is there after one possesses a dragon aura?” Xiao Yan curiously asked.

“If you really possess that thin dragon aura, all you need is to obtain a scroll containing a sound attacking type Dou Technique. When you are to fight with people in the future and suddenly let out a roar that shakes the opponent's spirit until he is distracted, won't you gain a great advantage over them? In a battle between the strong, even a split second could well determine victory and defeat... Moreover, the sound wave containing a dragon aura has a very great lethality toward a spiritual body. If you meet any strong spiritual bodies in the future, this is a killing move against them. Otherwise, you would feel far too bounded. After all, you do not have that strange energy attack of the ‘Hall of Souls’.” Yao Lao said faintly.

Xiao Yan's eyes could not help but become much brighter when he heard these words. He stood on the edge of the cliff, inhaled a deep breath of ice cold air before gradually closing his eyes. The Dou Crystal within the vortex of his body emitted a slight tremble. Wisps of green-colored

Dou Qi immediately surged forth and finally began to whiz past through his Qi Paths much like galloping waters.

As the speed of the Dou Qi circulating within the body wildly and abruptly became more intense, the powerful green-colored Dou Qi had already turned into a faint mist on the surface of Xiao Yan's body and completely shrouded Xiao Yan's body within it. Moreover, the energy fog had actually faintly had the intention of automatically agglomerating into Dou Qi Armor, even without his control.

Like a wind turbine, Dou Qi wildly circulated one wave after another. In the end, it actually emitted some strange, sharp, unusual noise. A faint throbbing pain appeared and disappeared from within his Qi Paths.

"Endure for a little while..." Yao Lao hurriedly said when he sensed Xiao Yan's slightly twisted face. For some unknown reason, there was an additional seriousness and anticipation in his voice.

Xiao Yan clenched his jaw tightly. His hand had begun trembling slightly at this moment. A while later, the throbbing pain suddenly became more intense. Xiao Yan's spirit trembled and he finally could not endure the pain any longer...

However, at the moment when Xiao Yan had reached his limit, the Dou Qi swiftly rotating in his body suddenly trembled. A wisp of strange and unusual energy was finally thrown out...

After this wisp of strange and unusual energy was thrown out, it appeared to be dragged by something as it directly rushed toward Xiao Yan's throat...

Xiao Yan clenched his teeth tightly. At this moment, a strange energy forcefully broke through. A unique sound wave, containing something that caused a person's spirit to tremble, came out with a mighty roar from Xiao Yan throat!

"Roar!"

Under this oppressive roaring, the mountains where the roars of Magical Beasts were originally occasionally heard, completely descended into a

certain frightened silence.

“Ah... you are indeed a lucky fellow... it is really unexpected that you are actually able to inherit that dragon aura... If that Gu Ling knew about it, I’m afraid that his eyes might well have turned red with jealousy.” Yao Lao’s soft whisper slowly sounded as he felt the strange sound wave which came spreading out from Xiao Yan’s throat.

Chapter 404: Peace Town

The roar, which carried a strange sound wave, spread mightily between the mountains and gradually disappeared after a long time. Only at this moment did the mountains, which had suddenly become silent, quietly recover some of the sounds of life.

On the mountain cliff, Xiao Yan suddenly held his neck, and let out a couple of intense coughs. After which, he forcefully swallowed a few mouthfuls of saliva. Only then did the feeling, of a blaze burning in his throat, weakened slightly.

“A natural reaction, You need not be too concerned...” Yao Lao smiled and comforted when he saw the expression pasted on Xiao Yan’s face.

“Cough... teacher. Have I successfully inherited it?” Xiao Yan’s face may be flushed due to the intense coughing spell, but his face still contained an excitement as he asked eagerly.

“Ah, from the looks of it, you have indeed successfully obtained that strange dragon aura which possesses the ability to cause souls to tremble...” Yao Lao laughed. Gratification was present in his laughter.

The excitement on Xiao Yan’s face was much more dense when he heard this. Although the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ did not immediately raise his strength, this so called dragon aura caused him to have another attacking method that would take others by surprise. One can imagine how much help this ability would be to Xiao Yan in the future.

“Although the current you may have successfully inherited the dragon aura from the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’, if you are to only rely on the dragon aura to emit that kind of sound wave, the damage it will create to your throat is extremely great. If you are not careful, you might end up turning yourself into a mute. That kind of loss would be too great.” Yao Lao voiced his thoughts.

“This so called dragon aura sound wave still needs to act in concert with those kind of sound wave Dou Techniques in order to be used?” Xiao Yan frowned slightly. After hearing Yao Lao’s acknowledgement, he could not

help but smile bitterly, “Dou Techniques of that kind are quite rare. Obtaining it is easier said than done.”

“Take your time to look for it. Back then, I did indeed have a Xuan Class sound wave Dou Technique. However, due to some unforeseen events later on, I lost it. Therefore, you can only rely on yourself to go and search for one.” Yao Lao sighed.

Xiao Yan merely shrugged his shoulders when he heard Yao Lao’s words. It appeared that there was no hope of receiving a sound wave Dou Technique from Yao Lao.

Xiao Yan smoothly took out a bottle of clear water from his storage ring, and violently poured it into his mouth. He wiped the water stains at the corner of his mouth and suddenly asked in passing, “Teacher, you seem to understand this ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ very well, no? You actually even know how to force out the dragon aura buried deep within the Dou Qi.”

Yao Lao suddenly descended into silence once Xiao Yan’s words left his mouth. When he saw Yao Lao’s action, Xiao Yan was also startled. He immediately recalled the initial reaction Yao Lao had when he saw the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ in the auction fair and could not help but feel a little embarrassed.

Yao Lao was silent for a long while before his faint voice once again sounded. However, the words that he said caused Xiao Yan to be a little stunned.

“Because the medicinal formula for the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ was created by me... Additionally, there are only two people on this continent who can refine this kind of medicinal pill. One of them is me. The other is...” When he spoke to this point, there was suddenly some additional faint, desolate feelings mixed with Yao Lao’s voice.

Xiao Yan clearly sensed the emotion within Yao Lao’s voice, causing him to wisely maintain his silence and did not interrupt.

“The other person is my student, whom I viewed as the most perfect inheritor back then... his talent in refining medicine was not any weaker

than yours. Moreover, the amount of effort I put into grooming him is similarly not any less than you. When he was still just a baby, I carried him out of some icy, cold debris and viewed him like my own son. I even treated him as the perfect inheritor to groom.”

Yao Lao smiled. His voice was flat, “It is just that... finally, he chose to betray me, because of some small matters... Ke ke, perhaps, it is really because of his ‘blessing’ that I have turned into this current state.”

“He ought to die.”

Xiao Yan sensed the desolation in Yao Lao’s voice. That was a coldness that crept out from deep within one’s heart after being betrayed and hurt by the person closest to you. Xiao Yan slowly exhaled. The fists in his sleeves were tightly clenched. He gazed forward. That soft voice of his appeared to be speaking to the senior (shi-xiong) whom he had never seen before.

“We should not have left the ‘Black Mark City’ so soon. Since those people from the ‘Eight Gate’ have auctioned out this thing, I think that they should have met him before. Moreover, I think that he would not randomly let anyone deliver such a valuable thing. He might have personally delivered it...”

“Ke ke, so what if we really managed to find him in ‘Black Mark City’?” Yao Lao said faintly, “I have already said that his medicine refining talent is not any weaker than yours. After being carefully groomed by me for so many years, the him back then was already the most dazzling, bright star in the alchemist world on the Dou Qi Continent. Now that so many years have passed, I’m afraid that he would be more outstanding than what he was before. Moreover, I am now being kept in check by the ‘Hall of Souls’ and don’t dare to carelessly appear. With just your current strength, you are most definitely not a match for him whether in terms of refining medicine or training of Dou Qi.”

Although Yao Lao’s voice was calm, Xiao Yan could still sense a thread of anger that was hidden very deeply, due to them sharing the same body. That thread of anger was like the volcano churning under the extremely

hard crust, being suppressed for a long time, waiting for the day when it completely erupts.

Xiao Yan inhaled a deep breath of air. He was silent for a moment before he lifted his head to look at the blue sky. His voice had suddenly become a lot gentler: “Teacher, I will surpass him. Regardless of whether it is in terms of refining medicine or one’s Dou Qi strength. After which, I will clean the house... I will let you know that your eyes were not mistaken for a second time!”

TL: clean the house – to remove (usually kill) the traitors within an organization

“Ke ke, good, good... I, Yao Chen also believe that these old eyes of mine will not be mistaken a second time!” Xiao Yan’s soft voice suddenly caused the sourness, usually associated with tearing, to spread out from deep within Yao Lao’s spirit. The betrayal that he had suffered in the past really caused him too much trauma. It was fortunate that the heavens had not truly let him descend into that never ending darkness and hopelessness.

Xiao Yan’s hands forcefully wiped his somewhat reddened nose. He parted his mouth, smiled brightly and said, “Looks like it is time to hurry to the Jia Nan Academy in order to quickly raise my strength. However, I should also find some time to learn the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’. That way, I can use it to flee if I were to meet any strong people whom I cannot defeat in the future.”

“The ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’ is a Di class Dou Technique. How is it going to be so easy to learn? Have you forgotten the hardship back then when you were practicing the ‘Flame Splitting Tsunami’? If you want to learn the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’, the effort you need to put in will not be any less than that time.” Yao Lao temporarily put aside his emotions and smiled as he replied to this little fellow whom he had poured all his effort and expectations in.

“Do you think the hardship I have endured over these few years has been little?” Xiao Yan smiled gently and said. He smoothly took the map of the ‘Black-Corner Region’ out of his storage ring, the one which Duo

Ma had given him back at the 'Black Mark City'. He carefully observed it before keeping it and turning his gaze toward the northern direction. With a smile, he said, "Let's go. we should be able to hurry over within three days' time!"

"Ah, it is likely that the strange 'Hall of Souls' would not enter the region within the Jia Nan Academy. After all, those old fellows in that academy are not useless. However, you should also forget about borrowing my spiritual strength to cheat. The old fellows in there are very sharp. It is very easy for them to detect traces of me." Yao Lao spoke with a smile.

"Uh... isn't teacher greatly underestimating me? Although I have managed to repeatedly beat extremely strong people that I cannot hope to match during these few years because of you, do I need you to help me fight against people of my age?" Xiao Yan rolled his eyes when he heard this as he smacked his lips and replied.

"Hee hee, that may not be guaranteed. As the oldest academy on the Dou Qi Continent, the number of geniuses in Jia Nan Academy are uncountable. Moreover, I heard that there is an inner academy within the academy. The students there are truly the ones chosen out of ten thousand. If you, this little fellow, is placed inside, I'm afraid there will be quite a good show..." Yao Lao teased.

"In that case, I am looking forward to it..." Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders. His back trembled slightly and the Purple Cloud Wings slowly extended from his shoulders. He flapped them lightly and his body rose abruptly before turning in midair. After which, they whizzed and he flew off into the northern horizon.

As Xiao Yan hurried through the journey this time around, he cautiously landed on the ground when he was passing through highly populated cities, as he was afraid that the movement by the Purple Cloud Wings would attract people's attention. Other than that, he had used the Purple Cloud Wings to hurry through most of the journey. Although hurrying through the journey in this manner exhausted an extreme amount of Dou Qi, it was not too much of a problem for Xiao Yan, who carried more than ten bottles of 'Energy Recovery Pills' with him.

The three days flew by quickly as Xiao Yan travelled swiftly without stopping. The Jia Nan Academy on the map was also becoming closer to where Xiao Yan was.

Around the evening of the third day, Xiao Yan, whose entire face was tired, suddenly felt his spirit peak. This was because Yao Lao had suddenly opened his mouth to speak.

“Little fellow, we are approaching the Jia Nan Academy. Descend. No one is allowed to forcefully fly within fifty kilometers of the Jia Nan Academy. Otherwise, you will be attacked without question.”

Xiao Yan hurriedly nodded when he heard Yao Lao words. His flying speed was greatly reduced before he slowly descended. Finally, his feet landed on a small hill. He stood at the peak of the hill as his gaze wandered from afar and was coincidentally able to see a barely visible small town between two majestic huge mountains.

As Xiao Yan observed the small town, he no longer cared about his body being covered with dust. He swiftly rushed down the slope of the hill and converged with that yellow soil road, which led directly to the small town.

There were quite a number of people walking on this yellow soil road. These people had clearly come from the ‘Black-Corner Region’. However, what caused Xiao Yan to feel somewhat astonished was that although these people’s body had a fierce and brutal aura, there was not the slightest killing intent overflowing from their faces. However, this manner of theirs, where killing intent was hidden within their hearts, did not appear to be of the natural kind. Instead, it appeared to be forcefully made. Therefore, the expressions of these passersby were really somewhat weird.

Seemingly having sensed the fixed gaze of Xiao Yan, who was off to the side, these people also stared back ferociously, causing Xiao Yan to feel it was a little comical. If this were to happen in the ‘Black-Corner Region’, it was likely that these fellows would have already drawn their knives and attacked.

“Looks like it really is indeed as teacher had said. Anyone who walks

until this point must withdraw the attitude that they have within the 'Black-Corner Region'... Tsk tsk, that Jia Nan Academy is also quite strong to actually be able to suppress these people, who lick blood from their knives, until obedience has been instilled in them." Seeing these people forcefully suppressing their fierceness and brutality, Xiao Yan could not help but shake his head and speak quietly in his heart.

Xiao Yan followed this yellow soil main road with lush green trees on both sides as he slowly approached the small town. That chaotic atmosphere within the 'Black-Corner Region' was indeed truly and completely isolated.

Ten minutes later, Xiao Yan stopped at the entrance of the small town and lifted his head to eye the horizontal sign board on the gate of the town. The words on it were very ordinary and very philistine. If it was placed in the 'Black-Corner Region', it would definitely be torn down the next day.

"Peace Town." This was the first small town one would come across when one entered the area surrounding Jia Nan Academy from the 'Black-Corner Region'.

Xiao Yan stood at the entrance of the small town. He was just about to step into this town when he suddenly felt that the voices around him had suddenly become much quieter. When he turned his head with some surprise, he realized that the faces of some of the people on the road, who had come from the 'Black-Corner Region' had become ghastly. Their ankles shivered as they eyed a large tree on the left, not far from the entrance to the small town.

The large tree was black in color with its tree top being spread in all directions, appearing to be displaying its claws. Under the shine of the setting sun, it emitted a faint, dark coldness. Xiao Yan's gaze swept over the tree and his eyes abruptly shrunk. He saw that there were some corpses between the tree's branches, which had been directly punctured and hung onto it. They swayed when the breeze blew over, emitting a creepy creaking sound.

“Is this that so called ‘Death Spirit Tree’....” Xiao Yan’s throat rolled slowly. Cold sweat quietly dripped from his forehead.

Chapter 405: Jia Nan Academy Law Enforcement Unit

The dense, dark aura emitted from that strange 'Death Spirit Tree' caused everyone, who had stopped at the entrance of the small town, to feel a chill in their bones. In the 'Black-Corner Region', the name of the 'Death Spirit Tree' had nearly already reached a stage where one would tremble with fear just from hearing its name. Many of the people, who had lived in the 'Black-Corner Region' for some years, would not forget the deadly and bloody battle between the 'Black-Corner Region' and Jia Nan Academy. There weren't many people who really paid much attention to the reason for why that bloody battle began. The only thing that people knew was after that bloody battle, the corpses of two strong Dou Wangs and one Dou Huang were hung on this 'Death Spirit Tree' with a incomparably cruel method...

From that day on, the area around Jia Nan Academy descended into a quiet region that was incomparable with the outside world. There were no longer any strong people from the 'Black-Corner Region' who dared to carry a face filled with killing intent and charge into these small towns. Even though there were a few riots, the people who were involved in it would become a corpse which was fixed onto the 'Death Spirit Tree' within an hour.

During these years, the notoriety of the 'Death Spirit Tree' had nearly spread throughout the entire 'Black-Corner Region'. Therefore even those diabolical people seldom had the courage to enter this place, which was like digging their own grave.

Xiao Yan stood at the entrance of the small town and inhaled a deep breath of air. The chillness in his heart was banished. He ignored those people, who hesitated and didn't dare to enter the town, and lifted his foot before stepping into this 'Peace Town', which represented the entrance into Jia Nan Academy.

The moment when Xiao Yan's footstep had just stepped into the 'Peace

Town', he sensed a strange undulation sweeping through him.

Ignoring the undulation which carried the taste of an inspection, Xiao Yan raised his head and eyed the street of the small town. There were quite a number of people on the street, with various different stalls placed on either side. Some children were shuttling about as they played roughly and laughed. This serene atmosphere of harmony was too drastic of an appearance from the 'Black-Corner Region'.

Those people on the street naturally discovered Xiao Yan, who had walked in through the entrance of the town. Although their eyes had a cautious light to them, they did not have an overly frightened reaction.

Xiao Yan's gaze swept over the street. He was just about to step onto it, when his heart suddenly moved. As he lifted his head and threw his gaze toward the rooftops of the houses in the town, only to see more than ten shadows briskly rushing toward the direction of the town's entrance like monkeys.

A moment later, over ten human figures flashed and appeared at the small town's main entrance. Their gazes swept across Xiao Yan and the others. Among them, a middle-aged man, who was presumably the leader, said faintly, "Anyone who wants to enter 'Peace Town' must report their identity, name, etc. Otherwise, they will be directly expelled."

Xiao Yan's eyes drifted across these ten plus human figures. He realized that other than the middle-aged man, who was the leader, there were male and females among the other ten plus people present. However, they were all very young. From their appearances, they appeared to be around twenty two or twenty three years old.

These young people were wearing the same pale-blue-colored clothes. Additionally, they wore an azure-colored badge on the chest area of their clothes. Within the badge was a dagger that was contaminated with some bright-red, liquid blood.

At this moment, these ten plus young people were using an alert and faint discriminating gaze as they stared at Xiao Yan and the rest.

"Additionally, after you have reported your name and identity, you will

consume this medicinal pill.” The middle-aged man waved his hand, and a bottle of pale-red medicinal pills appeared in his hand. He carelessly glanced at everyone people who had just arrived from the ‘Black-Corner Region’ whose expressions had changed slightly as he coldly spoke, “Rest assured that this is not some poison. It is a medicinal pill refined by the alchemist department in the academy that senses killing intent. If you all possess killing intent within your hearts while you are within the academy’s borders, this medicinal pill will emit a red glow from within your bodies. Our Law Enforcement Unit will follow this red glow and come searching for you. You should all know how our Jia Nan Academy deals with those who bring the practices of the ‘Black-Corner Region’ into this place... Before you all plan to leave the small town, you can go to the heart of the town to obtain the antidote. However, once the antidote is in your hands, there will be the Law Enforcement Unit supervising you all the way out of the town.”

When they heard the words of the middle-aged man, the faces of the people at the entrance of the town could not help but change. With their sensitive nerves from frequently living on a knife’s edge, how was it possible for them to swallow an unknown medicinal pill? Was that not equivalent to putting their lives into another person’s hands?

However, just as some unruly people could not resist wanting to retort, the ten plus men and women behind the middle-aged man immediately let out a choking sound. They then drew the longswords that they carried on their waists in an orderly manner. Dou Qi of different colors seeped out from within their bodies as they finally pointed the tip of their swords toward the entrance of the town. They clearly had the thought of directly attacking and expelling those people, should there be any disagreement.

“The rules of the ‘Peace Town’ have always been like this. If you don’t want to, then don’t enter. Otherwise, if you enter and go against the rules, there might be more decorations to hang on the ‘Death Spirit Tree’.” The middle-aged man held out his hand as he spoke indifferently. As his words fell, a powerful force slowly began seeping out from within his body.

“This person’s strength should be at least above a seven star Da Dou

Shi..." Xiao Yan softly muttered as he sensed the powerful force originating from the middle-aged man.

Seeing that the other party did not ease up, a fierce air involuntarily surged onto the faces of the people at the entrance of the town. However, when the corner of their eyes drifted toward the 'Death Spirit Tree' at the side, their entire bodies trembled as they felt a chill. The fierce aura, which they had just brewed, disappeared immediately and completely. They gritted their teeth and some people, who were still unwilling to swallow the medicinal pill, helplessly left.

As those people left, the remaining ones could only enter despite being unwilling. After which, they walked toward the middle-aged man and reported their names, took a pale-red medicinal pill and swallowed it in front of the Law Enforcement Unit.

The middle-aged man's indifferent expression only became slightly less dark when he eyed those people obediently swallowing the medicinal pill. However, he appeared to look badly upon everyone from the 'Black-Corner Region'. Therefore, he did not display any nice expressions from beginning to end.

"That... do the students of the academy need to eat this thing?" A young man in front of the middle-aged man suddenly asked when the latter habitually handed the medicinal pill to the former.

"Uh?" When they heard these words, the surrounding people, as well as the ten plus members of the Law Enforcement Unit, cast their stunned gazes over. As he eyed the young man's delicate and handsome face, the middle-aged man asked with a face filled with doubt, "You say that you are a student of this academy?"

"Back then, after I passed the student recruitment test, I took leave for a period of time. Therefore, I could only come by myself..." Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders, smiled and replied.

"You have passed through the 'Black-Corner Region' by yourself in order to come here?" The middle-aged man was immediately blank when he heard this. His face was filled with shock. It should be known that usually,

the new students of the academy would be escorted by some people sent by the academy all the way in after arriving just outside of the 'Black-Corner Region'. After all, a group of new students, who had just left their cottage, might not even be able to walk out of the Great Plains of the Black Region before they were finished off by a countless number of hidden knives. After all, this kind of chaotic place was somewhere people were eaten with their bones.

Xiao Yan simply smiled and nodded his chin slightly when faced with the strange gazes of the middle-aged man and the ten plus young male and females behind.

Seeing that Xiao Yan nodded his head, the astonishment in the middle-aged man's eyes became even more abundant. His gaze swept up and down Xiao Yan as he said, "Report your name, age, and recruitment instructor."

"Xiao Yan, eighteen, instructor..." Xiao Yan blinked his eyes. The mature woman who was as gentle as soft water back then surfaced in his mind. He could not help but say with a smile, "Instructor Ruo Ling."

"Eighteen years old? You dare to cross the 'Black-Corner Region' at only eighteen years old? Little fellow, regardless of whether you are speaking the truth, it is the first time that I have seen anyone with such boldness." The middle-aged man waved his hand. He was just about to turn around and instruct the people to investigate, when the expression of a young person, whose eyebrows were knit tightly together as he bitterly thought of something, changed abruptly. He cried out involuntarily, "Xiao Yan? Don't tell me that you are that Xiao Yan from the Jia Ma Empire who had taken two years of leave in one go?"

The involuntary cry of the young person caused the people around him to be blank. Immediately, their faces were filled with a sudden understanding. They threw a somewhat strange gaze at Xiao Yan. Everyone in the academy had heard of the name of this thorn-like student who had taken two years of leave before he even entered the academy in this one year. Of course, the reason for Xiao Yan's name being able to be deeply rooted within the hearts of the people at the Jia Nan Academy was

naturally because he had a great relationship to Xun Er...

“Xiao Yan? That Xiao Yan ge-ge of junior Xun Er?” After the few young people were stunned for a moment, there was suddenly an additional unknown meaning within the gaze they used to look at Xiao Yan. This kind of expression was something that Xiao Yan had once seen in Young Master Jia Lie’s eyes back at Wu Tan City.

TL: ge-ge – older brother or an older male friend (latter meaning is used by females in an affectionate manner

“Hei, this girl... I haven’t even come to the academy but she ended up creating all these inexplicable love rivals for me?” Xiao Yan was immediately amused as he eyed the expressions in the young men’s eyes. In his heart, he felt neither able to laugh nor cry as he shook his head.

“If you are speaking about the Xiao Yan from Wu Tan City of the Jia Ma Empire, then it should be me.” Xiao Yan spread out his hands at the middle-aged man, whose face was similarly surprised as he spoke with a smile.

“You should first come with us to the administrative office to check the records. If what you said is true, you don’t need to consume this thing. Oh right, I am called Huo De and I am the section leader of the second section of the Jia Nan Academy Law Enforcement Unit and also a Huang class instructor at the academy.” When Xiao Yan had mentioned the name Wu Tan City, the middle-aged man believed him a little more. However, in order to be safe, he still needed to have Xiao Yan follow him to the academy administrative office in the town.

“Instructor Huo De.” Xiao Yan greeted him. After seeing Huo De nodding his head, Xiao Yan followed him under the strange gazes of the ten plus Law Enforcement Personnel.

“Hey, is that fellow really Xiao Yan?” The ten plus academy’s Law Enforcement Personnel eyed Xiao Yan’s back as they followed at a distance, neither far nor near, behind Huo De. They could not help but begin to engage in private conversations.

“Looks like it should be the truth. He does not seem to be very handsome. Why does Junior Xun Er constantly think of him? She even directly rejected being wooed by our head because of him.”

“You should not really underestimate this Xiao Yan. Being able to charge into the ‘Black-Corner Region’ alone and safely arrive here is sufficient to explain something. At the very least, if we were to have a short stay of ten days to half a month within the ‘Black-Corner Region’, I dare not guarantee that my hands and feet would still be safe and sound.” A young man, whose face was ordinary, stared at Xiao Yan’s back, then glanced at his companions as he said faintly.

This ordinary looking young man appeared to have quite a great reputation in the Law Enforcement Unit. Therefore, when the other ten plus members of the Law Enforcement Unit were startled when they heard these words of him. They also nodded silently. As the first small town, which came into contact with the ‘Black-Corner Region’, they had seen many of those lunatics from the ‘Black-Corner Region’ everyday.

Chapter 406: Crucial Moment

“Hei, it actually is really that new student who took two years leave in one go...” Huo De was holding a casefile in his hand within the spacious room. There was a drawing in the casefile. Although the drawing was three years old with a face that still carried a little innocence, the overall outline was exactly the same as Xiao Yan’s.

Huo De closed the casefile in his hand before a genuine smile appeared on his face. He patted Xiao Yan’s shoulders and smiled before saying with a deeper meaning in his words, “Little fellow, you’re definitely not simple. The casefile states that you were merely a four star Dou Zhe two years ago, but now... I’m afraid that you are at least of the Dou Shi class right?”

Upon hearing Huo De’s words, those members of the Law Enforcement Unit were immediately startled. They threw their stunned gaze toward Xiao Yan. In two years, he directly advanced from a four star Dou Zhe to become a Dou Shi. This kind of speed was quite good.

Xiao Yan smiled, neither denying nor acknowledging.

“Are you planning to head directly to the academy now?” Huo De asked with a smile.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded.

“Carry this with you. Only then will you be permitted into the academy.” Huo De took out an azure badge from his storage ring, and handed it over to Xiao Yan. After which, he appeared to have suddenly remembered something. He turned his head toward those members of the Law Enforcement Unit and smiled before he asked, “Oh that’s right... coincidentally, tomorrow happens to be the inner academy qualifying competition, no?”

“Ah, yes that’s right Section Leader Huo De.” A member of the unit hurriedly replied.

“You are really lucky to be able to see such a grand event after just entering the academy. However, I recalled that there seemed to be your

name in the inner academy qualifying competition last year. This is something that Instructor Ruo Ling had helped you put in against all odds. Unfortunately, you did not come at the end. This really infuriated Instructor Ruo Ling. Therefore, I think that she is unlikely to put in your name this year. After all, the qualifying competition this time around concerns whether she can be promoted to a Xuan class instructor...:" Huo De smilingly said.

"Uh..." Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. As he recalled seeing the angry, green face of the gentlewoman back then, he laughed bitterly and said, "I really had something important and could not rush over at that time..."

"Hee hee, this does not concern me. If you want to explain, go and explain to her by yourself." Huo De smiled gloatingly. His gaze eyed the sky outside, which was gradually becoming dark. He voiced his thoughts, "The sky is already quite dark now. However, I see that you are hurrying to go to the inner academy, so I shall not hold you back. However, there is still an extremely large region of primeval forest outside the academy. There are many high ranking Magical Beasts there, with it being quite dangerous to pass through at night. I can let people drive the Griffin carrier to quickly bring you directly over to Jia Nan City. Is that okay?"

"In that case, thank you very much, Instructor Huo De." Xiao Yan rejoiced at hearing these words, and he quickly replied with gratitude. The map which Dou Ma gave him only covered the area of the 'Black-Corner Region'. Xiao Yan's head was shrouded by a mist as to which direction he should fly in after entering 'Peace Town'. It was naturally his current wish for someone that could lead him to his destination.

"Ke ke, it's fine."

Huo De smiled. The current him did not conform with the coldness he had displayed at the town's entrance at all. He waved his hand and called out two members of the Law Enforcement Unit, one male and the other female. After he gave instructions, he allowed the two to go out and make preparations.

“Xiao Yan, ah, I have to remind you once before you leave. Although you have not entered the academy, it is likely that you already have quite a number of potential opponents within Jia Nan Academy. Ke ke, I think you also know what the reason for this is... the kind of outstanding girl like Xun Er really has too great of an attractiveness toward those favored, talented, young men of the academy. She has come to the academy for over two years but her reputation has already caught up to that little witch who gives people a headache. Therefore, those love rivals of yours are not made of simple stuff. However, I advise you to know how to endure. That would be a little smarter...” Huo De moved closer to Xiao Yan and reminded him out of goodwill.

Xiao Yan laughed softly when he heard this. Although he had missed two years of life at the academy, he believed that his life and death grinding during these two years would definitely not be poorer than any teaching methods. During these two years’ time, he had even fought fearlessly against Dou Huangs and even Dou Zongs. Would he be frightened of those people who were the same age as him at the academy?

“Thank you for your reminder, Instructor Huo De. Xiao Yan will remember this in his heart.” Xiao Yan smiled at Huo De, and cupped his hands together. He heard the screeching sound of the Griffin outside. Without wasting a moment, Xiao Yan turned around and swiftly walked out of the room, and saw the huge Griffin, which was standing on the street, outside. At this moment, the man and woman on the Griffin were smiling at Xiao Yan as they said, “Junior Xiao Yan, please climb aboard. We will escort you to Jia Nan City.”

“Thank you very much.” Xiao Yan smiled. His feet gently pushed off the ground and his body agilely leaped onto the back of the Griffin. His feet immediately appeared to stick to its back and did not make the slightest of movements.

Seeing Xiao Yan’s totally still body, shock flashed across the faces of the two people on the Griffin’s back. It should be known that the feathers of this Griffin caused a sort of strange moist air. Some people, who were riding it for the first time, could only sit on a specific man-made saddle in

order to stabilize their body. Yet, Xiao Yan was able to completely rely on himself to let his body remain at equilibrium. This was something that was impossible for even the both of them to display so leisurely.

“What the Deputy Section Leader said is indeed correct. This Xiao Yan really does have some skill...” The two of them muttered in their hearts. They waved their hands at Huo De, who had walked out of the house, before emitting a whistle from their mouths. Immediately, the wings of the Griffin creeping on the ground was flapped. Its huge body began to rise into the air in a spiral.

As Xiao Yan eyed the small town, which was swiftly becoming smaller, he let out a breath of air. He lifted his eyes and gazed at the azure sky. An elegant and exquisite face of a young lady slowly surfaced in his mind. Her frown and laughter all caused the young man, who had lived two years of difficulty, to be that concerned.

“Xun Er, I can finally see you again...”

This flight continued for nearly the entire night. Of course, this also included the two to three hours rest midway. When dawn of the next day arrived, a thread of sunlight shot out from the edge of the land, expelling all the darkness between the land and sky.

At this moment, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes shut as he rested, opened them as though he suddenly sensed something. His gaze shot into the distance. There was an outline of a city occupying a large area, that left one speechless, slowly appearing within the faint mist.

“This is Jia Nan City huh...”

Although he was in the sky, he was still unable to see the entire city within his field of vision. From this, it could be seen just how large this city was.

“Ke ke, Junior Xiao Yan, we will stop this Griffin at the flying stop within the city. After that, you need to hurry to the academy on your own. It is our Law Enforcement group’s rotation this week, therefore, we cannot leave the ‘Peace Town’ for too long.” The young man from the Law Enforcement Unit smiled as he spoke to Xiao Yan.

“Thank you very much seniors.” Xiao Yan nodded and smiled as he voiced his thanks.

“There is no need...” The young man waved his hand. A whistle was once again emitted from his mouth and the Griffin immediately let out a soft screech. It waved its wings and shot down toward the large city.

From the flying stop at the Jia Nan City, Xiao Yan raised his head and watched the Griffin, which had once again risen into the air. He slowly exhaled, turned around, and exited this empty space.

A spacious, open street paved with green stone appeared in his eyes as he walked out of the flying stop. The human flow on the street was turbulent, causing Xiao Yan to quietly become breathless. This kind of human traffic was something that even the capital of the Jia Ma Empire could not compare with. It was indeed worthy of being the cradle of the oldest academy in the continent. Just its name alone would attract a countless number of people to this place.

Xiao Yan did not stop on the street for too long. He followed the route that the Law Enforcement member earlier had pointed out and hurried over. After going around in circles within the city in this manner for half an hour, Xiao Yan could only helplessly stop. He eyed that street, which he was still unable to see the end of, and could not resist bitterly laughing, “Dammit. Why was this city constructed until it became so big?”

Xiao Yan sighed despondently. He once again lazily hurried on, slowing his footsteps as he walked toward the Jia Nan Academy, which was located in the middle of the city.

As he slowly walked on that spacious street, Xiao Yan sensed the usual city’s atmosphere and sighed in relief within his heart. It was fortunate that this place was not in any way similar to the ‘Black-Corner Region’...

He once again walked passed a street. In the distance, he appeared to be able to see the vague outline of that ancient academy...

“Stop that fellow!”

Xiao Yan had just made a turn, when a cry was suddenly emitted from a

spot not far in front of him. A minor disturbance immediately rippled onto the street with a huge group of people forming a circle and judged as they watched the fight within it.

Xiao Yan's gaze drifted toward the circle of people, who were watching the show, but did not move any closer. His palm gently patted the large Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back, as his footsteps began to lead him around the crowd at an even pace.

Just as Xiao Yan was about to directly walk toward the academy in the distance, a cold angry laugh in the human crowd caused Xiao Yan to suddenly pause his footsteps.

"Ma Yan, don't waste your effort. You actually want to go after my younger cousin with that strength of yours?"

"Brat, if you don't want to do it nicely... attack. We don't need his life, but he must see red!" After that cold laughter sounded, another voice that appeared to be angry from embarrassment sounded. Immediately, there was the muffled sound of flesh coming into contact from within the human crowd.

Xiao Yan had his back facing the crowd. He was silent for a while as he heard the muffled sound that appeared from within the circle before he sighed gently and immediately turned around.

Within the crowd, a young man in blue clothes, who was around eighteen or nineteen, was violently exchanging blows with a few men around him, while his eyes were filled with fury. Seeing the Dou Qi that was seeping out of the young man's body, it appeared that he was at the Dou Shi class. However, the four young men surrounding and attacking him clearly had strengths that were no weaker than his. Therefore, the blue-clothed young man was at disadvantage. His face would occasionally suffer a blow, and traces of blood flowed out from the corner of his mouth.

"Bang!"

Another wave of scuffles occurred. One of the young men coldly and viciously kicked at the blue-clothed young man's lower abdomen. The back of the latter's body immediately began to curl up. Despite the four

young men seeing that he had no ability to retaliate, they did not show even the slightest sign of stopping. Four legs moved together. In a tricky and vicious manner, they violently kicked at the blue-clothed young man's body.

“Bang, bang, bang...”

The feet, which contained a ferocious force, were about the land on the blue-clothed young man's body, when a black shadow suddenly flashed past. After which, it collided firmly with the four feet. Four horrible shrieks were immediately emitted. The four of them hugged their thighs and rolled painfully on the ground.

After the black shadow pushed the four people back, it turned into a large, black ruler that was inserted into the hard ground. The blue-clothed young man hugged his lower abdomen, and stood up with great difficulty. His expression was somewhat pale as he cupped his hands toward the black-robed young man, who had his back facing him, “Mister, thank you very much.”

“Xiao Ning, you have a lot less vigor compared to when I last saw you two years ago.” The black-robed young man slowly turned around. He looked at the blue-clothed young man, whose face was stunned at seeing the former, while speaking with a faint smile.

Xiao Ning. This blue-clothed young man was actually Xiao Ning, who had some grudge with Xiao Yan at the Xiao clan back then!

“You... you are Xiao Yan?” Xiao Ning's face was completely full as he eyed that face which he had not seen for two years. He finally recovered a long while later, but still had difficulty believing the situation.

“I thought that you would not recognize me.” Xiao Yan laughed. Although he had some grudges with this fellow, whom he did not really see eye to eye with when they were a younger, the current him was no longer that impulsive child he had been back then. Those things had naturally vanished long ago. Moreover, no matter what happened, the person in front of him had a thread of blood relation to him.

“How can I forget. Younger cousin Xiao Yan...”

Xiao Ning let out a bitter laughter. He eyed Xiao Yan in front of him, feeling a complicated emotion. Now that he had muddled about on the outside for two years, he was similarly no longer a child. Only in the outside world, which contained all sorts of people, did he feel that those experiences in the clan back then were the most precious memories within his heart. No matter how one put it, one's kin was ultimately a little closer to oneself.

"Older cousin Xiao Ning." Seeing the apologetic smile Xiao Ning gave him, Xiao Yan also smiled. He patted the latter's shoulders.

"These fellows?" Xiao Yan turned his gaze toward the four people rolling on the ground and asked.

"Isn't it still because of Xun Er? These fellows know about our relationship and keep trying all sorts of means to get news about Xun Er from me. It is really too troublesome. However, they don't dare to attack me at the academy. Today, when I came out to buy something, I coincidentally ended up being seen by these fellows." Xiao Ning was somewhat helpless. From the looks of it, it appeared that this was not the first time that this had happened.

Xiao Yan could only laugh bitterly when he heard this. It really was true that beauty was a source of trouble. It was likely that the girl had now truly lost the innocence she had back then?

"Hee hee, Xun Er is very outstanding. A woman undergoes many changes when she grows up. She is now even more beautiful. There have been an unknown number of people who had fallen for her during these two years. I think that you will also be shocked when you meet see her again." Xiao Ning said with a laugh.

"How much can a child change?" Xiao Yan shook his head and laughed softly. When he said such aged words, he forgot that he was also merely eighteen years old.

"If you say these words in the academy, others will gang up to fight you..." Xiao Ning rolled his eyes. His expression abruptly changed as he appeared to recall something. He then grabbed Xiao Yan and ran toward

the entrance of the academy, “Dammit, I have actually forgotten. Today is the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition. Instructor Ruo Ling could not resist Xun Er’s spoiled pestering and took the risk of being promoted to a Xuan class instructor by putting your name in. If you are absent like you were last year, Instructor Ruo Ling can forget about being promoted for the next three years.”

“Uh? She still wrote my name?” Xiao Yan’s face was completely stunned.

“Ah, however, even if you got here in time, I don’t think it would be of much help. The Inner Academy Qualifying Competition is not an ordinary one. All of those who have the qualification to participate are among the top students in the academy. Without at least the strength of a seven star Dou Shi, one might likely be eliminated once he enters the competition ground.” Xiao Ning’s hurried running speed slowed as he sighed.

Xiao Yan was startled. He opened his mouth, but before he had the chance to speak, Xiao Ning continued, “Forget it, forget it. Being able to come is better than being absent. Even if you lose, Instructor Ruo Ling would only lose this chance of promotion. There is still a chance the next time around...”

Once he finished saying those words, Xiao Ning pulled Xiao Yan with great force and quickly ran toward the ancient academy.

As a major event of the Jia Nan Academy, the so-called Inner Academy Qualifying Competition was naturally the event that attracted the most attention. Moreover, the renowned people in the academy would appear within this qualifying competition. The male and female students who were viewed as the idols of others, as well as their source of their adoration, were undoubtedly a great source of attraction.

Therefore, the stadium used by the academy was squished in and filled with people, despite the academy having already prepared the largest one for the competition’s use. Countless numbers of students from the Jia Nan Academy squeezed and bumped heads as they charged into the seats of the stadium. At one glance, it was like a sea of dense black heads (hair) and the noise shot to the clouds.

The spacious open ground was circular in shape. The area surrounding the open ground was a set of rock stairs, which repeatedly spread upward. That shape was like an arena. The sea of people seated surrounding the arena could clearly see the entire place.

At this moment, there were two human figures on the open ground. One man and one woman. The two flashed and exchanged blows. Ferocious Dou Qi ripples shrunk and burst from the points where their palms made contact, causing the surrounding people sitting in the viewing gallery to frequently emit shocked sighs. However, clearly over half the gazes in the viewing gallery were paused on the lovely figure wearing a pale-green dress, with her lovely body flashing and moving in a light and elegant manner.

The two human figures engaged in one risky exchange after another. The pale-green colored figure suddenly paused. Her hands glowed brightly. It carried a ray of light as it imprinted itself onto the chest of the young man. A powerful force directly shook the latter until he was pushed out of the battle arena.

“Senior, thanks for giving way!” The green-clothed young lady smiled after defeating the opponent with a single blow. She bowed toward that man, who was quite handsome, in such a manner that no one could find fault in her manners.

“Junior Xun Er is indeed worthy of being the student with the greatest potential this time around. I have lost.” Although the handsome young man had lost, he was straightforward. With a smile, his gaze watched that green-clothed young lady, who was like a lotus, causing people to be relaxed and happy. He immediately withdrew in a free and easy manner.

“Xun Er wins this round!”

The green-clothed young lady turned around and leaped down from the competition stage only after she heard the cry that sounded from the Referees Platform.

“Xun Er, not bad!” After the green-clothed young lady descended from the stage, a lady from the viewing gallery waved at her.

“Instructor Ruo Ling.” Xun Er ignored the heated gazes shooting at her from her surroundings, and ran into that specially arranged viewing gallery and shouted with a smile. She immediately turned her gaze toward a group of ladies, who were off to the side of the viewing platform, and smiled as she said, “Elder Cousin Xiao Yu.”

“Little girl is becoming more and more powerful. You were actually even able to defeat that Mo Wen. Looks like you will definitely be able to enter the Inner Academy this year.” A beautiful lady wearing a pale-purple academy uniform smiled as she walked over. When she walked, her pair of long, mellow legs wrapped in the trouser leggings immediately attracted some heated gazes, which were originally looking at Xun Er. Those alluring, long legs were really a killing weapon when it came to attracting men.

“Hopefully.” Xun Er smiled. After she greeted the ladies behind Xiao Yu, she dragged Xiao Yu’s hand, sat beside Instructor Ruo Ling and softly spoke with a smile.

“Elder Cousin Xiao Yu, that... has Xiao Yan ge-ge not arrived yet?” Xun Er softly asked as her eyes glanced at Instructor Ruo Ling off to the side who appeared to be relaxed. The brows of the latter, however, had some anxiety between them.

TL: ge-ge – elder brother or used to address an older male friend/relative (latter usually used affectionately by female)

“Yes.” Xiao Yu also sighed softly when she heard this. She immediately tightened her fist as she softly reprimanded, “I also don’t know exactly what that fellow has been doing. Back then, we agreed that he could only take one year’s leave. Now, he has dragged it on for a full two years. Moreover, he is still absent this year...”

“He should get here very soon.” Xun Er gently bit her lip as she replied.

“I also hope so... but today is the competition. If he is still absent, Instructor Ruo Ling...” Xiao Yu laughed bitterly.

While the two of them were quietly whispering privately, another three round of fighting had passed. A man flashed up onto the stage at the

fourth round. The long lance in his hand landed on the ground with great force. The somewhat heated gaze of his swept toward the direction where Xun Er was at without any intention of covering it up.

“Xuan class – Third class Xue Beng against Huang class – second class... Xiao Yan!”

TL: Class as in classroom

As the voice from the referee seats fell, the noisy open ground suddenly became much quieter. A countless number of gaze were thrown toward the position where the Huang class – second class was at. During these two years, this name Xiao Yan, had already been firmly remembered by all the students and even the instructors of Jia Nan Academy. After all, this was the first time that they had met such a thorny student, which had directly taken two years leave since the founding of Jia Nan Academy.

Of course, a greater reason was that during the last Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, that was the only name which was absent. Therefore, now that they heard this name again, everyone’s gaze were thrown toward where Xun Er’s group was seated. Due to Xun Er’s outstanding performance at the academy, she had many suitors. However, during these two years, there was still no one who could move her heart. The only form of address, which one could hear the most from her mouth, was that so called Xiao Yan ge-ge. This kind of extremely affectionate address naturally caused Xiao Yan, who had never shown himself, to become everyone’s common enemy.

When faced with the countless number of gazes being shot over, some cold sweat involuntarily surfaced on Instructor Ruo Ling’s smooth forehead. Her fist was also tightly clenched as her eyes swept around her, hoping that the figure, whom she had valued greatly two years ago would appear once again like a savior.

The open ground, which had become silent, also caused Xun Er and Xiao Yu to become anxious. They exchanged glances and saw some anxiety from within each other’s eyes.

“Xiao Yan huh.. a coward who dares not even reveal himself and letting

a girl receive such unnecessary criticism. This person, won't do." A white-dressed young man on the viewing platform, who was not bad looking, shook his head and said faintly, "He is not worthy of Xun Er..."

The white-clothed young man was shockingly the person who had met Xun Er at the foot of the mountain a few days before. He appeared to be called Bai Shan, one of the outstanding people among the younger students in Jia Nan Academy. His strength was not much weaker than Xun Er's.

"Chi, this is the man whom Xun Er always talks about incessantly? Is his zodiac sign a turtle? If one were to follow this kind of man, isn't it better to follow me? What is so good about those stinky men? They only think with the lower half of their bodies." On another very good location in the viewing gallery, a young lady wearing a red-colored dress had her hands crossed in front of her chest. Her back leaned against an iron pipe with her exchanting curves appearing extremely alluring against the background of the straight iron pipe. The current her could not help but curl her lips as she eyed the open ground where there was actually no one who came out to engage in a fight. There was a little disdain as she spoke with a cold smile.

"Little witch, sit properly. Acting so presumptuously in public, where is your decency?" A white-haired old man by the side of the red-clothed young lady could not help but blow his beard angrily when he saw that posture of hers and the independent special words of hers.

The red-clothed lady unceremoniously rolled her eyes at this old man, who clearly had quite a high position within Jia Nan Academy as she coldly snorted, "To think that you are still the Deputy Headmaster of the Outer Academy. If it was up to me, I would have long kicked that Xiao Yan out of the academy. Two years leave. Humph. How arrogant."

"There is no choice. That girl Xun Er insists on protecting that boy." The old man helplessly shook his head. He immediately voiced his thoughts: "However, if he is to still absent this year, then I really have no other choice. The rules of the Jia Nan Academy cannot be broken..."

“Don’t tell me that you hope that Xiao Yan would be able to appear during the last few minutes?” The red-clothed young lady gave the old man an opaque glance as she said.

“I really do hope so...” The old man sighed. He slowly closed his eyes and waited for this farce to end.

After the silent atmosphere continued for two minutes, some private conversations finally began to appear.

“Ah, this bastard didn’t keep his promises...” Xiao Yu sighed and softly cursed when she saw the disappointment-filled face of Instructor Ruo Ling, who sat next to her.

Xun Er lowered her head. She pulled Instructor Ruo Ling’s sleeves and softly said, “Instructor, I’m sorry...”

“Ke ke, you need not blame yourself. This matter is not related to you.” Instructor Ruo Ling patted Xun Er’s hand and forcefully gave a comforting smile, “It’s alright. At the very most, I will wait another three years...”

“Let’s go.” Instructor Ruo Ling stood up and said to Xiao Yu and Xun Er. Seeing her somewhat reddened eyes, it appeared that she was not as free and easy as she had pretended to be with her mouth.

A group of male and female of the same class similarly sighed with disappointment as they stood up, preparing to leave the stadium. However, they had just stood up when Xun Er’s lovely body suddenly stiffened. Her pretty face was abruptly lifted as she muttered, “He is here...”

“Uh? What?” By her side, Xiao Yu and the others were startled, having not heard clearly.

“Xiu!”

Just as Xiao Yu’s question fell, an ear-piercing sound of rushing wind suddenly appeared on the open ground, attracting everyone’s gazes.

As the sound of rushing wind appeared, a black figure suddenly shot down from the sky and suddenly smashed into the open ground. The hard

ground was directly shattered into powder, which soared up and shrouded a small area.

“Who is it?” Seeing the black shadow which had shot up, the young man carrying a lance, who was called Xue Beng, could not help but cry out coldly.

Xun Er’s gaze stared intently at the area hidden in the dust. An excitement that she had difficulty hiding swarmed onto her face, “He is here!”

When they heard these words of Xun Er, the lovely bodies of Instructor Ruo Ling, as well as Xiao Yu and the rest quivered. Their gaze were immediately cast toward the area on the open ground.

Under a countless number of gazes, the soft sound of footsteps could be heard from within the dust. In the completely silent open ground, the sound of footsteps was like something stepping in people’s heart, causing their hearts to beat faster.

“Boom, boom.” The soft sound gradually became clearer. A black-robed young man carrying an enormous black ruler on his back faintly appeared from within the dust. A moment later, he finally appeared under everyone’s gaze!

“Huang class – second class, Xiao Yan!”

The black-robed young man took a step forward and raised his head slightly. That faint voice of his was like thunder as it resonated in the ears of everyone present.

Chapter 407: One Strike

The voice, which had suddenly appeared, directly caused the open ground, where private whispers had just broken out, to once again quiet down suddenly. Numerous gazes, that contained some astonishment, were thrown onto the black-robed young man in the middle of the open ground, who was carrying a huge black ruler, that was around his height. In an instant, the entire stadium was completely silent.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge...” Xun Er eyed the back of the figure standing on the open ground, who was taller compared to two years ago, but also a little skinnier. An elegant smile, that would cause the surrounding male students to lust for greatly, was immediately revealed on her exquisitely pretty face.

“This fellow... must he create such a big commotion every time he arrives. He really likes showing off.” Xiao Yu’s pretty eyes stared intently at the back, which she had not seen for two years. She heaved a great sigh of relief in her heart. However, her mouth was still unwilling to forgive as she spoke out loud.

“Ha ha, Xiao-Yu jie-jie, is that person the Xiao Yan ge-ge that Xun Er is always talking about? It is really unexpected that he managed to hurry over at the very last moment.” Beside Xiao Yu, a group of young ladies, who appeared to be of the same class as Xun Er, laughed as they asked while their gazes stared at the person’s back in the open ground.

TL: jie-jie – older sister or addressing a slightly older close female friend or relative

“That’s right. That is the brat which causes Xun Er to worry all the time. You are all disappointed, right?” Xiao Yu could not help but say as she took one glance at Xun Er, who had paused her lips and smiled.

“Hee hee, we must see his strength. What is the use of just being good looking?” The young ladies laughed as they spoke. In Jia Nan Academy, an environment where strength was similarly respected, being the most handsome was not the most important. Being able to easily defeat strong

opponents in the competition and pull back elegantly, was the style of the perfect man within their hearts.

“However, even if he managed to get here in time, the situation is not very good. That Xue Beng is a nine star Dou Shi. Moreover, the Qi Method he practices is at the Xuan Class Low Level. His lance techniques have been practiced until they have reached their pinnacle. The Xuan Class Middle Level lance technique Dou Technique, ‘Overlapping Waves’, has defeated quite a number of opponents...” A young lady, whose appearance was quite beautiful, suddenly said somewhat sheepishly.

Xiao Yu and the others frowned slightly when they heard this. They immediately glanced at Xun Er whose eyes were totally calm. They said somewhat uncertainly, “That brat should be able to handle it. I don’t believe that he would achieve nothing during these two years, given that character of his...”

For a long time, Instructor Ruo Ling’s pretty eyes stared at the young man in the battle arena, who was carrying a large ruler. She also quietly sighed in relief within her heart. Since Xiao Yan had managed to get here in time, even if he were to lose the match, she would only lose the chance of being promoted to a Xuan Class Instructor for one year. She still had the opportunity to fight for it next year. After all, with the potential that Xiao Yan had displayed back then when she was recruiting students, she believed that Xiao Yan would be able to catch up as long as he was able to practice at the academy for a year.

“Good, good. Let’s all not daydream. Since this fellow has finally arrived, let us remain here and support him. Regardless of how long he can endure, he is at the very least a member of our Huang Class – Second Class.” Instructor Ruo Ling turned her head and looked past all the young ladies as she helplessly said. However, the meaning behind her words clearly indicated that she similarly did not hold much hope of Xiao Yan being able to defeat Xue Beng.

“Is he that Xiao Yan?” A white-clothed Bai Shan at the viewing gallery, whose figure was straight and tall, like a jade tree standing in the wind, looked at the black-robed young man in the open ground while feeling

some doubt. He did not expect that this fellow had really managed to make it at the very last moment.

“His breath is very calm. Perhaps he might have some ability, but that is only so.” Bai Shan lifted his eyebrows, and said faintly as he watched the black-robed young man’s expression, which did not change even a little because of the surroundings that were filled with people. The him who had great expectations, he did not give this potential love rival a very high score.

“Is this the Xiao Yan ge-ge that Xun Er is obsessed with? He is finally willing to appear... but he does not appear to be very handsome. I really don’t know why she misses him so much.” The gaze of the red-dressed young lady swept over Xiao Yan’s body with great interest. However, she immediately curled her lips and said.

“What is the use of being handsome? Can it let the referee give him extra marks?” The white-haired old man by her side rolled his eyes. A pair of turbid eyes like that of an ordinary old man stopped on Xiao Yan’s body. A moment later, his brows were knit slightly together. Shock flashed across his eyes. Shaking his head, he faintly said with a smile, “A very interesting fellow...”

“I hope that he won’t be immediately defeated by Xue Beng the moment he comes out to fight. Otherwise, Xiao Xun Er’s face would be totally lost.” The red-clothed young lady’s delicate hand rubbed a thread of long, pale-red hair hanging down as she said somewhat gloatingly.

“Just watch...” The old man smiled. His gaze came into contact with the referee platform not far away and realized that there was also some shock within the eyes of the few old friends there. It looks like they should have also seen some of the unique points about this little fellow called Xiao Yan.

“You are Xiao Yan?” The long lance of the cold faced Xue Beng was heavily smashed into the tough ground in front of the tens of thousands of gazes in the stadium. His gaze shot directly at the black-robed young man as he coldly said.

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded.

“You are not worthy of her.” Xue Beng words were direct with disdain when he saw Xiao Yan nodded.

“Perhaps.” Xiao Yan immediately felt somewhat helpless when he heard this. Another person pursuing Xun Er. Looks like this girl had really muddled along quite well within this Jia Nan Academy.

“There are countless numbers of people in Jia Nan Academy who were waiting for you to make your appearance. From today onward, it is likely that you will have an unceasing number of troubles. I may be the first to challenge you but I will definitely not be the last.” Xue Beng coldly laughed. He immediately swung the long lance in his hand and pointed its tip toward Xiao Yan, “I will defeat you in front of her. A mediocre person like you does not have the qualification to possess an outstanding girl like her.”

“They are indeed just a group of jealous children...” Xiao Yan was somewhat speechless as he eyed Xue Beng, who declared war the moment they had met. He sighed and slowly grabbed the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand. The body of the ruler trembled slightly as it tilted and pointed downward. As he waved the ruler, an extremely great sound of compressed air being sliced reverberated in the arena.

“I also quite dislike receiving never ending trouble. Therefore, in order to put an end to that, you will have to suffer a little.” The huge ruler left a vast black shadow on the ground as Xiao Yan lifted his head and smiled as he replied to Xue Beng.

“Oh? You want to use me to ‘kill the chicken to warn the monkeys’?” That Xue Beng was no fool. He understood Xiao Yan’s intention when he heard the latter speak in this manner. Immediately, a veiled fury flashed across his eyes as he coldly laughed, “Aren’t you afraid of twisting your tongue by boasting so much?”

TL: kill the chicken to warn the monkeys – a warning to others

“Can we begin?” Xiao Yan tilted his head and threw his gaze toward the seven or eight old men in the judge’s seats as he asked with a smile.

“Yes.” The few old men exchanged glances when they saw Xiao Yan looking over. They then nodded.

“Arrogant Brat!”

Xue Beng’s expression became slightly cold when he saw the judges nodding. His hand held his lance tightly as he feet abruptly stomped on the ground. The long lance vibrated and carried a sharp sound as it shot toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan did not move his body. He eyed Xue Beng, who was the first to attack, while holding the long lance in his hand. The heavy ruler in his hand shook slightly. It was just as he had said earlier, Xiao Yan clearly understood that there were quite a number of people within Jia Nan Academy who possessed enmity toward him because of Xun Er. Now that he had just arrived, the only method to put an end to the unceasing challenges was to frighten them!

Moreover, even if he excluded having to remove those never ending troubles, Xiao Yan also urgently needed to obtain a suppressing victory that left no one in doubt when he had just come to Jia Nan Academy, where talented individuals gathered!

He wanted to prove one thing to everyone. That was the Xiao Yan ge-ge, whom Xun Er had never stopped talking about, had the strength to stand in front of her and help her block any storm!

He wanted to let everyone know that her judgement would not disappoint anyone!

Back then, he was a useless person. Therefore, Xun Er had once stood in front of him. Now, however, he did not want the things of the past to repeat itself.

Therefore, he did not need to have any stalemate-like bitter fight in this battle. What he needed was a destructive and uninteresting victory!

His assertive arrogance this time around was a tiny compensation to that girl who had bitterly waited for him for two years.

He wanted to let her know that he had not wasted these two years.

The thought in his heart was like a tide overturning. He inhaled a deep breath, and inserted the heavy ruler into the ground. His hands were extended out of his sleeves, which he rolled up.

Just as the opponent's fierce attack was about to reach him, he steadily arranged his sleeves. The sea of people surrounding the open ground were immediately quiet as they eyed Xiao Yan's calm manner. They could only use one word to describe Xiao Yan's current performance: Presumptuous!

Xue Beng's eyes were icy cold as he eyed Xiao Yan's action. The anger in his heart grew even greater. Following the change in the thoughts within his heart, the Dou Qi immediately rolled and poured into the long lance. The tip of the lance carried a pale-red glow as his palm abruptly struck the end of the lance's handle. The lance immediately shot out explosively. In the blink of an eye, it was about to reach the front of Xiao Yan's throat!

"Ah!"

The expressions of Xiao Yu and Instructor Ruo Ling could not help but change slightly when they saw that lightning-like attack of Xue Beng in the battleground. Only Xun Er was still maintaining her calm. In her heart, she clearly knew that the current Xiao Yan was no longer that useless person in the Xiao clan back then. Even Nalan Yanran, who was carefully groomed and taught by the Misty Cloud Sect, was defeated by his hands. From this, one could see just how strong the current Xiao Yan was!

Under the countless number of gazes, containing various different kinds of emotions, this long lance attack by Xue Beng, which had a mighty momentum, was in front of Xiao Yan's throat in a lightning quick manner. However, just as everyone was waiting for the bloody scene, which was about to appear, the tip of the lance, which was less than half an inch from Xiao Yan's throat, suddenly stilled as though the air had solidified.

Countless number of gazes followed the long lance as they moved and finally stopped at the handle of the lance. A pale long hand was tightly holding the handle of the lance there. That incomparably ferocious attack of Xue Beng was actually forcefully stopped by one hand.

In the stadium, an uncountable number of gazes once again slowly

moved along the hand. They finally stopped on the body of the black-robed young man, whose expression was indifferent. The entire place immediately erupted into chaos!

Xiao Yan lifted his gaze. He laughed at Xue Beng in front of him, whose expression had changed greatly. The corner of his mouth was lifted into a tiny arc as he softly said, "One strike!"

As his voice fell, Xiao Yan's body swayed and instantly turned into a blurry shadow. Xiao Yan tightened his right hand, and a sharp, ear-piercing force immediately screamed out!

Xue Beng sensed the terrifying force that suddenly rose. His eyes shrunk and dismay finally pasted on his face.

Chapter 408: Killing A Chicken To Warn A Monkey

TL: Make an example of others

The black-colored shadow carried a terrifying force and abruptly appeared in front of Xue Beng. A slight ripple surfaced in the air around any area where the fist passed. An endless number of ear-piercing explosions sounded, like that of muffled thunder.

Under Xiao Yan's ferocious attack, that was like a thunderbolt, one could hear the cracking sound repeatedly being erupted from the hard ground. Numerous crack lines began to swiftly spread out from Xiao Yan's feet under a countless number of shocked gazes.

The speed which Xiao Yan used to attack was as fast as lightning. However, Xue Beng was also not a person who relied solely on their tongue. Although he was shocked within his heart at the strength that Xiao Yan had displayed, his reaction was not slow either. When Xiao Yan's fist was swiftly expanding in front of his eyes, he did not hesitate even a little as he gave up the long lance, which the other party had clamped onto. He took a small step back and tapped his finger onto his storage ring. A silver-colored long lance that was completely made from steel instantly appeared in his hand.

With the lance landing in his hands, Xue Beng's fighting intent, which had greatly shrunk due to being shocked by Xiao Yan's terrifying attack, swiftly soared. A low, angry roar was emitted from his throat and the Dou Qi in his body was circulated to its limit at this very moment. A pale-red-colored Dou Qi splurged out of his body and finally formed a red-colored Dou Qi cloak on the surface of his body.

Xue Beng's hands similarly did not even have the slightest pause as the Dou Qi flowed within his body. The tip of the lance shook and actually formed more than ten afterimages. The red glow surged like a storm and the afterimages abruptly came together. Finally, the entire long lance turned into an eye-piercing, red glow that pierced explosively toward Xiao

Yan.

“Overlapping Waves!”

Xue Beng roared softly within his heart. The fierce forward momentum of the long lance in his hand pierced directly at Xiao Yan’s fist. As the lance’s body trembled, a red glow swarmed forward one wave after another. The hot air was like a red colored wave of fire.

Under the watch of a countless number of people in the open ground, an eye-piercing red glow carried a monstrous wave of air. This kind of momentum caused quite a number of people to create an uproar. He was indeed a top student, who had the qualification to participate in the Inner Academy Qualification Competition. This kind of ferocious force might well be able to catch up with those strong people who had just entered the Da Dou Shi class.

The red-colored glow was swiftly enlarged in those dark, black eyes. Xiao Yan sensed the heated force that came pouncing over but his expression still remained calm. During the two years, the opponents whom he exchanged blows with were mostly strong people that far surpassed him. He had even seen attacks that were tens or hundreds of times stronger than this. Therefore, wanting him to withdraw because of an attack of this level was undoubtedly an idiot talking in his dreams. However, the acute ability the opponent had to be able to unleash a full force resistance within such a short amount of time did cause Xiao Yan to be a little startled. But... that was all.

Xiao Yan’s fist trembled slightly. The green-colored Dou Qi surged out abruptly and finally swiftly agglomerated into a green-colored cuticle layer on his fist.

“No matter how you struggle today, there is only one path for you!” The strength of the fist which was covered by a green-colored cuticle suddenly soared greatly. Xiao Yan lifted the corner of his mouth, and finally did not show any mercy or sluggishness as he swung his right arm. His fist smashed forward explosively and heavily collided with the tip of Xue Beng’s lance in front of the eyes of countless number of people.

“Octane Blast!”

“Bang!”

The two came into contact. Instantly, a loud, explosion of sound was emitted from the battleground. The hard rock surface of the ground where the two people collided was directly shattered into powder with a bang. Crack lines repeatedly spread out like a spider web.

“Ka Cha! (crack)”

The powder soared into the air from the ground. In an instant after the fist and the lance came into contact, a clear metal cracking ‘ka cha’ sound was suddenly emitted from the point of contact. A human figure suddenly shot backward, out of the faint dust. He wildly vomited a mouthful of bright red fresh blood. After his body landed heavily on the ground, he actually nestled on the ground and rolled over the ground for over ten meters before he finally came to a stop.

Countless number of gazes hurriedly moved to the human figure that had been launched backward and swept over it. When their gazes saw the person who had flew backward in defeat, the entire open ground instantly descended into silence.

At the edge of the open ground, Xue Beng’s upper garments were basically shattered into pieces by the colliding force. His entire body was covered with blue-black dust, created from the rock fragments shooting at his body. The remaining blood trace by the corner of his mouth caused him to appear exceptionally miserable. Of course, what shocked people the most was the long lance, held in Xue Beng’s blood covered hands, had broken into two. The crack line of the lance clearly showed that it was directly broken by a strong force.

Being able to still use one fist to forcefully break a long lance made of steel after a nine star Dou Shi displayed a Xuan class Dou Technique. This attack was something that even some Da Dou Shi present would have difficulty doing. However, this Xue Beng, who had some reputation even within this Jia Nan Academy, was directly attacked by a new student, who had just come to the academy with this most raved tactic.

As they watched the edge of the open ground where Xue Beng was having a difficult time struggling to get up and then at the broken long lance, some of the people, who had certain thoughts, immediately felt a cold feeling surge out from within their hearts. From the looks of the strength which Xiao Yan had displayed, this new student who had taken a full two years leave was indeed not an ordinary person.

The dust above the open ground slowly fell. A young man wearing a black robe slowly walked out. The robe on his body, which was so tidy that there was not even the slightest fold, was two extremes when compared to Xue Beng, who was in an extremely dire state. From this, anyone, as long as they were not too stupid, could clearly understand that the strength of this young man called Xiao Yan had far surpassed Xue Beng!

Xue Beng's current strength was a nine star Dou Shi. Since Xiao Yan defeated him, then... his strength was at least that of a strong Da Dou Shi!

As they thought of this possibility, the crowded viewing gallery immediately emitted the sound of people inhaling a breath of cold air. The gaze that they used to look at Xiao Yan clearly had an additional unknown meaning behind it. A Da Dou Shi at this age. Even in this entire Jia Nan Academy, those were considered the outstanding people who were the cream of the crop!

“Very... very strong...”

The mouths of Xiao Yu and the others in the viewing gallery were wide open. Their faces were filled with shock as they watched the skinny back, who was standing straight and tall, on the open ground. A young lady sitting in the back could not resist muttering involuntarily as her eyes started seeing stars. Who could imagine that Xue Beng, whose strength was around that of a nine star Dou Shi, was defeated by one punch in a decisive manner after only one exchange. This was in spite of him unleashing his strongest Dou Technique!”

Originally, they were still discussing just how many exchanges Xiao Yan could hold out for. However, their discussion had yet to come to a close when this ending, that caused them to be stupefied, appeared in the

battleground.

“This fellow... isn’t his improvement over these two years a little too quick?” Xiao Yu said with a bitter smile.

Instructor Ruo Ling, off to the side, slowly recovered from her shock. She eyed the back of the young man in the battleground. Even at this moment, she was still somewhat in disbelief. This thorn-like student, who had missed two years of education, at the academy had actually broken through a top student of the Xuan class. Moreover, the method he used to defeat the opponent was actually the strongest and most direct kind.

As Instructor Ruo Ling recalled the thunder-like punch earlier, she questioned herself. If it was her instead, it was likely that she would not be able to completely endure it. Instructor Ruo Ling suddenly laughed bitterly as she thought like this in his heart. Two years ago, that little fellow in Wu Tan City, who had used all of his methods in order to walk out from under her hands after twenty rounds and was now displaying attacks that even she herself must carefully consider before she dared to guarantee if she could endure it. This improvement speed... was really frightening.

“No wonder he can let such an outstanding girl like Xun Er constantly bear him in mind. This fellow really does have some capital.” Instructor Ruo Ling tilted her head and eyed the pretty face of Xun Er, which contained a smile, while Ruo Ling muttered in her heart.

At one side of the viewing gallery, Bai Shan crossed his hands in front of his chest. His brows were knit slightly together as he eyed the black-robed young man, who was standing up straight, in the middle of the open ground. He slowly exhaled a breath a long while later and said with a faint smile, “Not bad, you do indeed have some ability. The current you has the qualifications to let me raise you to a position where I have to take you seriously. I hope that you can endure a few more rounds. When that time comes, I want to personally fight you if there is a chance...”

“A strong rival, but, she will definitely be mine!” Bai Shan gaze turned toward the direction where Xun Er was at. He softly muttered as he watched her wearing a pale-green dress. While being surrounded by a

group of females, she appeared much as an elegant young lady like a lone lotus blooming.

“Ah, that fellow has a very sharp and powerful fist. Even Xue Beng’s ‘Overlapping Waves’ could not withstand it for even a moment. I think that his strength should be around a three star Da Dou Shi.” The red-clothed young lady, whose figure was as enchanting as a demon, used her eyes, which emitting a slyness, as she eyed Xue Beng, who was defeated in an extremely crisp manner. She could not help but speak with shock.

“Ah, it really is a sharp and powerful fist. Moreover, he even knows how to agglomerate energy to the different parts of his body and use it to increase his attacking and defensive strength. This is only possible if one has an excellent control over Dou Qi. On this point, he could even be comparable with you.” The old man beside her nodded slightly. His voice similarly contained some surprise.

“Ke ke, now you know just what kind of judgement that girl, Xun Er, has? This fellow is no ordinary person. I think that even if you or Bai Shan were to face him, no one would know just who would obtain victory.” The old man glanced at the skinny back on the battleground and said with a deeper meaning behind his words.

“Oh?” The hair-thin, curved, willow eyebrows of the red-clothed young lady rose when she heard this. She laughed in a spoiled fashion, “I want to find an opportunity to fight him. If I win, I want him to let me have Xun Er...”

“You... you, this brat. There are so many outstanding men wooing you. It is fine that you don’t like them but why are you harassing Xun Er? Must you throw away all my old face before you are satisfied?” The old man was immediately furious when he heard the red-clothed young lady words as he whispered angrily.

“What is so good about those stinky men? Which of them would pursue me if it were not for this face of mine?” The red-clothed young lady pursed up her lips. Her delicate hand rubbed that sly elf-like pretty face as she spoke with disdain.

The old man was so furious at this lawless young lady that fumes were emitted from the seven holes of his body. However, he was helpless and could only swing his sleeves and continue to turn his gaze back toward the battleground.

Within the battleground, Xiao Yan glanced at Xue Beng, who was at the edge of the open ground. The latter no longer had any strength to fight. Only then did Xiao Yan turn his head toward the judges' seats and smile as he asked, "May I inquire if I have won this round?"

"Ke ke. Of course, yes." A gray-robed old man on the judge's seat smiled as he looked at Xiao Yan. His eyes contained an unknown feeling within them as he nodded.

When he heard those words, Xiao Yan bowed slightly. He shook his hands in front of the tens of thousands of gazes and the Heavy Xuan Ruler came flying over to him. After which, he grabbed it with one hand, flicked his wrist and inserted it on his back. He lifted his head to see that smiling, green-clothed young lady and some warm feelings rose in his heart. His feet pressed against the ground and his body gently leaped down the competition stage. Finally, he jumped toward the place where the Huang Class – Second Class was seated.

"Sorry. I am late..."

Xiao Yan watched the beautiful young lady standing prettily in front of him. That face had been deeply imprinted in a deep region of his heart during these two years. He ignored the numerous fiery gazes around him as he rubbed his head and said gently in a somewhat apologetic manner.

Xun Er lifted her pretty face and stared at that delicate and handsome face, which had less innocence and tenderness, but more matureness and perseverance compared to two years ago. A beautiful smile, that could turn all living beings upside down, suddenly appeared on her face. She immediately did an action that caused everyone's sight to be as dull as a wooden chicken.

The young lady in the academy, who had never displayed any action toward any man that was beyond those normal for an ordinary friend,

opened her hands slightly. After which, she leaped into the warm embrace, which she had parted with for two years, greedily absorbing the warm feeling.

Chapter 409: Bumping Into One Another At Night

The entire open ground was silent as everyone watched the green-clothed young lady leaping into Xiao Yan's embrace. At this moment, one could almost hear the sound of countless hearts breaking.

Instructor Ruo Ling, as well as Xiao Yu and the others beside Xun Er, never expected that the young lady, who was usually reserved and indifferent, would actually perform such a bold action in public. Their faces were immediately stunned and they finally let out bitter laugh a long while later.

Xiao Yu eyed Xun Er, who had pounced into Xiao Yan's embrace, and then glanced at Xiao Yan, whose smile was like warm alcohol, much like a drunk person who had just drank wine that had been stored away for a long time. An unknown and somewhat uncomfortable feeling suddenly rose within her heart.

On the other side of the viewing gallery, the faint smile present on Bai Shan's face finally became dark and solemn at this moment.

"When has Xun Er become so bold? Just because of a man?" The eyebrows of the red-clothed young lady also rose until they were almost vertical at this moment. Were it not for the old man beside her pulling her back when he saw the situation, she might have been unable to resist rushing over and forcefully pulling those two apart, who were stuck together like glue.

Xiao Yan's hand tightly looped around that delicate, willow-like waist. He lowered his head and gently sniffed the black hair of the young lady, which contained a refreshing fragrance. Since she was able to do such a bold action that announced the relationship between the two of them in public, then as a man, he naturally would not choose to withdraw. This was even though the heated gazes shot from all around him caused him to feel as though he was in a furnace.

“Cough...” After the two of them hugged for nearly a full minute, Instructor Ruo Ling, who stood off to the side, finally could not withstand the heated gazes bearing down on them from the surroundings, and immediately gave a gentle cough.

Hearing the cough, Xun Er, who was snuggling in Xiao Yan’s chest like a little bird relying on a person, finally sobered up and woke up from the bliss and excitement from finally being able to see the person she missed so much in her heart. Immediately, an intoxicated blush flew up onto that elegant and indifferent, lotus-like face. She hurriedly pulled away from Xiao Yan’s embrace and shrunk behind Xiao Yu like a Mimosa (sensitive/embarrassed plant).

Seeing the extremely rare but lovely shy side of this little girl, Xiao Yan also laughed softly. He turned his head and threw his gaze toward Instructor Ruo Ling and said with an awkward smile, “Hee hee, I’m sorry, Instructor Ruo Ling.”

“You still remember that I am your instructor?” Instructor Ruo Ling glanced at Xiao Yan and said blandly.

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly when he saw her expression and attitude. He knew that over these past few years, he had really infuriated this lady, whose character was as gentle as water. However, due to him being in the wrong, he did not retort, but merely hardened the skin on his head, and received her criticism and fury.

“Humph, don’t think that everything will be fine if you don’t speak. You really do have some nerve to have missed two years of lessons. Do you know how many times I have talked to the academy until my lips were worn out because of you?” Instructor Ruo Ling said furiously.

“Instructor, Xiao Yan, this brat, has indeed gone overboard with this matter. However, he had managed to arrive here in time today, and even defeated that fellow Xue Beng. As long as Xun Er and him can maintain an undefeated record in the remaining rounds of the Qualifying Competition, you will be promoted to become a Xuan Class Instructor. If you still think that that will not lessen your anger, it is not too late to wait until he has

finished fighting all the rounds of the Qualifying Competition before punishing him. In any case, now that he has arrived at the academy, do you need to worry about him running away?" Seeing Xiao Yan smiled bitterly and helplessly, Xiao Yu may have quietly muttered 'you deserve it' in her hear, but the words she said with her mouth helped Xiao Yan absolve the situation.

Only after hearing Xiao Yu's words did Instructor Ruo Ling's furious face become warmer. She glanced at Xiao Yan and said, "Alright, I will wait for you to finish the Qualifying Competition before finding you to settle our score!"

Xiao Yan heaved a sigh of relief in his heart when he saw that Instructor Ruo Ling had temporarily gave up her criticism. He raised his head and threw a gaze of gratitude toward Xiao Yu. The latter, however, rewarded him by rolling her eyes and snorting.

"Hei, Elder Cousin Xiao Yu, after having not seen you for two years, you are becoming increasingly beautiful. Has anyone managed to woo you?" Xiao Yan ignored Xiao Yu expression and asked with a smile.

"Why do you care!" Hearing Xiao Yan's tone, which was the same as when he was a child, a strange feeling immediately surfaced in her heart. At the same time, those sexy long legs of hers were raised a little as though it was a conditional reflex, preparing to kick.

"Alright, don't flirt around here. The Qualifying Competition for today is going to be over soon. Follow me back. There are even more intense fights tomorrow and the day after. It is not something easy to get into the Inner Academy." Instructor Ruo Ling waved her hand. She ignored Xiao Yu, whose pretty face had turned an embarrassed red because of her words, turning around and leading them out of the open ground.

Behind Instructor Ruo Ling, Xiao Yu ferociously cut the gloating Xiao Yan with her eyes as she pulled Xun Er and quickly followed.

Xiao Yan carried the heavy black ruler and followed behind the group. Just as he was about to exit the open ground, his footsteps suddenly paused. He frowned slightly as he turned around and shot his gaze toward

the other side of the arena. At that spot stood a young man wearing white clothes. The latter was facing him with a dark and solemn face, that carried a gaze which contained enmity.

“Who is this person? He appears quite strong...” Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze. He mused a little before shaking his head slightly. Then he turned around and under a countless number of gazes, he swiftly followed Instructor Ruo Ling and the others, who were about to exit the open ground.

They walked all the way out of the noisy open ground. Instructor Ruo Ling chased away those young ladies with starry eyes surrounding Xiao Yan. After which, she led Xiao Yan, Xun Er, and Xiao Yu, past a few paths filled with greenery before finally entering into an unique and elegant pavilion house.

Once they entered the house, Instructor Ruo Ling invited the three of them to sit randomly before turning her gaze toward Xiao Yan. She said with a faint smile, “Little fellow, I really cannot believe it. You’ve actually improved so quickly during these two years.”

“I was merely lucky.” Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders and said with a smile.

“Forget it, I am not going to talk with that glib tongue of yours. Since you have come to the academy, and I have placed your name into the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, in the next two days you and Xun Er must endure and enter the top fifty. That way, you will be able to obtain the opportunity to enter the Inner Academy to train. As for me, I will also be promoted from a Huang Class Instructor to a Xuan Class Instructor...” Instructor Ruo Ling waved her hand, and seriously said.

“What advantage is there to enter the Inner Academy?” Xiao Yan leaned on his chair with his ten fingers crossed in front of him as he asked.

Instructor Ruo Ling’s eyes stared intently at the smiling young face. A long while later, she suddenly sighed and said, “Looks like taking two years of leave is indeed good for you. Which part of the current you still has your innocence from Wu Tan City back then? With one glance at this you,

no one would treat you as a young man who is only eighteen years old.”

Xiao Yan smiled without speaking. He had indeed experienced too many things during these two years. The few big ups and downs had also further solidified and stabilized the calm character he had groomed from a young age. The current him had truly and completely no innocence left from his youth.

“The Jia Nan Academy is divided into the Inner and Outer Academy. The Outer Academy is the place that we are currently living at. The new students whom we have recruited from the Continent will all train in the Outer Academy until their strength has reached a certain stage. They can then participate in the annual Inner Academy Qualifying Competition. As long as they are able to enter into the top fifty, they will be able to obtain the qualifications to enter the Inner Academy. The Inner Academy is different from the Outer Academy. One can bluntly say that the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy is merely a place to test the new students. The true core of Jia Nan Academy is within the Inner Academy!” Instructor Ruo Ling arranged her thoughts before slowly speaking.

“The Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy is divided into two different classes. The class which I manage is the Huang Class. That Xue Beng, who challenged you earlier, is from the Xuan Class. From this difference in class, you can know that the overall strength of a Xuan class is stronger than that of a Huang class. Of course, nothing is absolute. For example, Xun Er and you...”

“I see that your current strength is likely around that of a Da Dou Shi, right?” Instructor Ruo Ling suddenly stared at Xiao Yan and asked.

When she heard Instructor Ruo Ling’s question, Xiao Yu threw an astonished glance at Xiao Yan. The current her merely had the strength of a five star Dou Shi. This fellow had become a Da Dou Shi after leaving for two years. Isn’t this speed of progress a little too quick?”

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded slightly under Xiao Yu’s shocked gaze.

“You are indeed an abnormal being that can be compared with this girl, Xun Er.” Instructor Ruo Ling muttered, “According to the rules, I also

cannot reveal too much regarding the matters of the Inner Academy. However, since it can be called the true core of the Jia Nan Academy, it will have areas that the Outer Academy has difficulty comparing to. It will only benefit you if you are able to enter.”

“Alright, I will do my best...” Xiao Yan widened his hands and said with a smile. On the way here, he had heard of Yao Lao mentioning that Inner Academy. Now that he had the opportunity to enter it... he would naturally not object.

“With your strength, I think that it shouldn’t be too difficult charging into the top fifty, as long as you do not meet the few people like Bai Shan and Little Witch.” Instructor Ruo Ling also sighed in relief when she saw Xiao Yan nodding his head as she continued.

“Bai Shan? Little Witch? I seemed to have heard the second name being mentioned by instructor two years ago...” Xiao Yan repeated these two names in his mouth as he smiled, his voice trailing off.

“That Bai Shan is one of the most prominent figures in Jia Nan Academy’s Outer Academy during these two years. He is handsome and has great strength. An unknown number of female students have also become crazy about him. Additionally, he appears to also be one of the people wooing Xun Er. Even if I don’t tell you, he would come and find you sooner or later.” Instructor Ruo Ling covered her mouth and laughed in a lovely manner.

Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly.

“As for that Little Witch, she is the granddaughter of the Deputy Headmaster. Her background is not simple. This, along with her frightening training talent that is not weaker than yours, as well as the Deputy Headmaster personally teaching her, I think that her strength might be slightly greater than Bai Shan’s. Due to her independant and special style of doing things, as well as her beauty, she similarly has quite a number of people pursuing her within the academy. However, it appears that she does not have much interest in men. Instead, she likes women very much. With Xun Er’s temperament and her talent, she is a natural

target that the Little Witch covets... Therefore, your appearance should also cause her to feel an enmity toward you.” Instructor Ruo Ling let out a cough, as she said with a slightly red face.

Xiao Yan’s expression became a little strange when he heard this. He tilted his head and eyed the similarly helpless Xun Er, before saying in a manner which suggested he was neither able to laugh nor cry, “Capturing both the men and women?”

Xun Er followed Xiao Yan’s manner and spread her hands, indicating that she also did not have a choice regarding this matter. She had kept a sufficiently low profile during these two years. She even gave up entering the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition once because of Xiao Yan.

“Ah... there are indeed opponents everywhere...” Xiao Yan sighed gently. He lifted his head and smiled as he said to Instructor Ruo Ling, “However, for the sake of Instructor Ruo Ling being promoted, I will do my best to enter the top fifty.”

“That is good. You should rest here for today. This is the place where I am staying. Usually, Xun Er and Yu-er also live here with me. From tomorrow onward, the strong people of the Qualifying Competition will all appear. When that time comes, you will have some baseline of the strength of these opponents.” Instructor Ruo Ling stood up, waved her hand and instructed.

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded.

.....

In a quiet room, that was filled with book shelves, seven old men were seated on the chairs around a circular table. Seated amongst them was the old man who had spoken with the red-clothed young lady back at the competition ground earlier. From his Qi, which were as calm as before, one could see that his actual strength and position was likely not low. After all, an ordinary old man did not have the qualification to sit in this meeting room that decided the big and small matters within the academy.

At this moment, that old man, who was addressed by the red-clothed young lady as the Deputy Headmaster, slowly placed a document in his

hands down. His gaze looked once around the room and said with a faint smile, “Tsk tsk, this Xiao Yan is indeed not an ordinary person. He contended with the Misty Cloud Sect of the Jia Ma Empire with his own strength and even directly kill a strong Dou Wang before finally successfully escaping from the hands of a Dou Zong. This battle record is something that even the top students in the Inner Academy would have some difficulty achieving.”

“Oh?” As they heard the words emitted from the old man’s mouth, shock flashed across the shrivelled faces of those few old men around.

“This is the information regarding Xiao Yan. You can all take a look for yourself.”

The Deputy Headmaster flicked his finger and the information in front of him was automatically shot toward those old men below. His finger gently tapped on the table’s surface. A long while later, he heard the shocked gasps that those old men, who had finished reading the information, emitted in unison. He smiled as he said, “His potential is very great. However, his relationship with the Misty Cloud Sect has deteriorated a little too much and basically cannot be mediated...”

“His potential is indeed very great. If we groom him properly, he might well be another strong person at the peak.” One gray-robed old man softly said, “We need not be too worried about the Misty Cloud Sect. With just one Dou Zong, they don’t have the courage to do anything to us, the Jia Nan Academy.”

“The Misty Cloud Sect is indeed nothing... but behind them...” The Deputy Headmaster furrowed his brows. He had just spoken half way when he suddenly became quiet. His expression was changing slightly. Finally, he did not reveal some of the more sensitive matters. He waved his hands and said, “We should secretly observe Xiao Yan a little. If there is really value in grooming him, we can give it a try.”

“Yes...” When they heard this, the other old men did not have any objections as they nodded their heads. They exchanged gazes with one another as they saw the Deputy Headmaster becoming silent. Their bodies

swayed slightly and strangely disappeared from their chairs.

.....

The late night was quiet as the faint moonlight scattered downward. That specially unique house appeared unusually quiet under the moonlight.

A white shadow suddenly flashed out from the quiet night. His feet gently pressed against a tree branch as his body elegantly drifted onto a small pile of rubbles not far from the house. His calm gaze shot directly toward a certain room of the house, and a faint silver-colored Dou Qi, that could be partially seen, seeped out from within his body.

“Xiu...”

After merely an instant after the Dou Qi within the white shadow surfaced, a black shadow shot out from within the house in a lightning-like manner. After leaping and sweeping past a couple of times, he steadily landed on a huge rock not far from the white shadow. He lifted his head slowly and indifferently eyed that white-clothed, handsome, straight and tall man.

The two pairs of pupils collided in the dark night. Some sparks shot out without any forewarning.

“Leave her.” The white-clothed man’s voice was ethereal as it wandered out slowly.

Xiao Yan laughed softly when he heard this. He raised his head slightly. That delicate and handsome face appearing extremely untame under the shine of the moonlight.

“You dare?”

Chapter 410: Clashing For the First Time

The faint words reverberated throughout the night without disappearing.

The eyes of the white-clothed young man were ice cold, as he stared at the untamed and arrogant face of the other young man. The former did not say any other words. His wrists twisted slightly and a faint silver-colored Dou Qi began brewing in his palm. There was actually a faint, soft, muffled sound of thunder being emitted from within it.

“Lightning Type Dou Qi?” Astonishment flashed across Xiao Yan’s eyes as he heard the muffled lightning sound emitted from that silver-colored Dou Qi. He did not expect that this fellow actually possessed this rare Dou Qi element, similar to his Second Brother.

Xiao Yan moved his hand. A pale-green Dou Qi also overflowed from his palm as Xiao Yan watched this white-clothed young man whom he had met once during the daytime with an indifferent expression. He did not have the slightest fear or timidity.

“The weak do not have the qualifications to possess her!” The white-clothed man glanced indifferently at Xiao Yan, who did not shrink back. He laughed coldly and his toes abruptly pushed off of the pile of rubble. His body turned into a silver glow that cut through the darkness, and shot explosively toward Xiao Yan in a lightning like manner.

Due to the sharp offensive of this white-clothed young man within the darkness, some weak thunderclaps actually appeared out of nowhere.

The silver glow swiftly expanded within the dark, black eyes. Xiao Yan’s expression still remained calm. He slowly tightened his hand and a pale-green-colored Dou Qi slowly spat out and shrunk on his fist, much like numerous tiny long snakes.

“Bai Shan, what are you doing?” The silver glow cut open the dark night. However, just as Xiao Yan was prepared to unceremoniously counter the attack, a lovely cry, which contained some anger, suddenly broke the silence of the night. Quickly following this, a golden glow shot out and

finally intercepted the silver glow in midair. The two energies collided abruptly, and an intense energy storm blew the rock fragments on the ground until they flew in all directions.

Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly the moment the lovely cry sounded. He slowly relaxed his tightly clenched fist and lifted his head to watch the white-clothed man, whose body flashed back toward a tree branch after being intercepted by the golden glow.

A pale-green colored figure flashed out from the house and appeared by Xiao Yan's side an instant later. Her eyebrows were vertical as her pretty face contained a hint of anger, while she eyed the white-clothed man on the tree branch.

"It is nothing. I just want to spar a little with Junior Xiao Yan." After seeing the green-clothed young lady appear, the gaze of the white-clothed man remained paused on her body. He coldly glanced once at Xiao Yan by her side and immediately said with a faint smile, "Xun Er, why do you need to be so anxious? With Junior Xiao Yan's ability, how could he participate in the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition if he could not even block a random blow of mine?"

"Senior Bai Shan, I only treat you respectfully because I respect you as a senior. However, if you continue to cause unreasonable trouble in this manner, don't blame me for not giving you any face." Xun Er slowly calmed down the anger in her heart as she softly replied.

Bai Shan's calm face changed slightly when he heard this. Since he came to know Xun Er, their relationship may not be considered to be overly close, but based on what he thought, the two of them could at least be considered friends. Yet, when he heard Xun Er actually using such a tone to talk to him, he could not suppress the emotions within his heart, even with his scheming. His expression had become a lot uglier.

"If you are a man, then don't hide behind a woman." Bai Shan slowly inhaled a breath of air and suppressed the anger in his heart. He coldly glanced at Xiao Yan, lifted the corner of his mouth and laughed coldly with disdain.

“Bai Shan! You better not go overboard!” Xun Er’s face quietly sunk. She shook her delicate hand and a golden-colored energy swiftly began to agglomerate in her palm. After Bai Shan had repeatedly provoked Xiao Yan, she had already reached her breaking point.

“Girl, stay behind. It is fine for us men to settle these matters.” Xiao Yan suddenly extended one hand and grabbed Xun Er’s wrist. She turned around to take a look, only to see the faint smile on Xiao Yan’s face. With her comprehension of Xiao Yan, she knew that when it came to such an instance, he would be extremely serious. She immediately hesitated for a moment and could only nod her head and take a step back.

“Do you want to fight?” Xiao Yan took a step forward, twisting his neck. He glanced at Bai Shan on the branches, and softly asked with a smile.

“I will not mind if you want to.” Bai Shan gently flicked his sleeves as he coldly said. When he saw Xun Er, who had been maintaining a distance from him, was actually obedient and docile toward Xiao Yan, an evil flame surged up within his usually calm heart. With his appearance, strength and training talent, in what way was he weaker than this person called Xiao Yan in front of him? However, why does... she keep ignoring him?

“I mind!”

A cold cry was suddenly emitted from within the house. Instructor Ruo Ling immediately flew out. Her expression was somewhat ugly as she looked at Bai Shan before she said in a deep voice, “Student Bai Shan, this reckless action of yours is against the academy rules. If you want to challenge him, you can wait to see who is better in the Qualifying Competition. By coming stealthily in the night, not only are your actions against the rules, but you might also end up with the reputation of taking advantage of others.”

Seeing that even Instructor Ruo Ling had also come out after being disturbed, Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly. He knew that they could not fight this battle tonight. Immediately, he could only withdraw the Dou Qi into his body, pulled Xun Er before turning around, and slowly walked toward the house.

“Xiao Yan, I hope that you will not be eliminated from the Qualifying Competition. The weak do not have the right to obtain anything. When that time comes, I also hope that you do not continue to hide behind a woman. A man that Xun Er acknowledges should not be a coward, right?” Bai Shan said faintly as he watched the back of the two people who had turned around.

“Xiu!”

The sound of rushing wind suddenly sounded. A force cut past the black darkness and violently smashed toward Bai Shan’s face.

A cold glint flashed across Bai Shan’s face when he sensed the rushing wind force that came toward him from the front. He gently flicked his finger and a wisp of silver light shot out explosively. It finally collided with the rushing wind force and immediately shattered it into powder. If one stilled one’s eyes to see what the object shot out was, one would see that the item originally blasting through the wind was actually a piece of rock fragment.

“Can you not be so long winded like a woman? You are Bai Shan, right? One of the so-called popular people? You are only so-so. You might be a very experienced person when it comes to jealousy but you need not tell me those fierce and useless words with your razor tongue. We shall see each other at the Qualifying Competition.” Xiao Yan’s faint, dark and cold voice slowly sounded.

“You will leave her if you are defeated?” Bai Shan coldly laughed.

“Are you sure you are called Bai Shan and not Bai Chi (Idiot)?” The footsteps of Xiao Yan who was about to enter the house suddenly paused. He turned around, and looked at the green-faced Bai Shan pitifully. After which, he shook his head and pulled the laughing Xun Er as they walked into the house.

TL: Bai Chi – wordplay from the name Bai Shan – means idiot

“Ah, you should go.” Instructor Ruo Ling could not help but sigh as she watched the green-faced Bai Shan. This person was usually very calm. Why was it that he had become this impetuous in front of Xiao Yan today?

It appeared that he has deep thoughts for Xun Er. Otherwise, it would not result in him losing his footing in this manner.

Once she said these words, Instructor Ruo Ling turned around and drifted into the house, leaving Bai Shan alone. His expression was green one moment and white at another moment, as he stood on the tree branch, enduring the cold wind late in the night.

Bai Shan stood on the tree branch and inhaled a deep breath of icy cold air. He slowly tightened his fist and muttered, "It is really unexpected that I can actually lose my cool to such an extent because of her. Therefore... she will definitely be mine. That Xiao Yan... I shall defeat him in the Qualifying Competition. The woman whom, I, Bai Shan fancy... how could she run? Moreover, she is so outstanding. What qualifications does that, Xiao Yan, have to match her?"

Only after saying this did Bai Shan's face gradually recover. He indifferently glanced at the house, and gently pressed down on the tree branch with his toes. His body drifted down and with a few immediate movements, he disappeared into the dark black night.

Xiao Yan watched the white-colored figure, who had gone far away, from the side of a window in the house. His eyes narrowed and a cold glint flashed across it. He turned around, eyed Xun Er behind him and helplessly shook his head, saying: "Girl, have you lived well these past two years?"

TL: Girl isn't the best translation, it'd be more of an intimate "nickname" more so than anything else with a literally meaning

"Ah." Xun Er's delicate hand held Xiao Yan's hand as she gently nodded.

Pulling Xun Er's hand, Xiao Yan sat in front of the window, and eyed the luster of the stars in the sky. He suddenly whispered with a smile, "Do you want to know how I lived these past two years?"

"Ah." Xun Er once again gently nodded. She held Xiao Yan's hand between hers and felt the faint warmth.

With one hand, Xiao Yan slowly rubbed Xun Er's soft, black hair, which

extended to her waist. He was quiet for a moment. Only then did his voice, which was a little hoarse, appear. He slowly spoke about all the events after he had left Wu Tan City back then one at a time. Of course, he chose to vaguely pass over the connections he had with some girls during this time, the 'Heavenly Flame', and other things which needed to be kept a secret.

Leaving Wu Tan City, entering the Magical Beast Mountain Range, breaking into the desert, creating a mess in the Mo clan, entering the capital, dominating everyone with his skill during the Alchemist Grand Meeting, ascending the Misty Cloud Mountain, defeating Nalan Yanran, fighting the entire sect by himself, killing a strong Dou Wang, and after that, escaping from the hands of a strong Dou Zong. Each of these soul-stirring and blood boiling events were spoken about by Xiao Yan indifferently. Although his tone was indifferent, the various dangers contained in them still caused people to have the feeling that their hearts were being held tightly.

By the window side, the faint moonlight scattered downward, shining on the young man and young woman, covering them with a layer of faint, silver yarn.

A long while after Xiao Yan's words fell, Xun Er also descended into a silence. Her head gently leaned against the shoulders of the former. Even though she had known most of the events, she still felt an agitation in her heart when she once again heard Xiao Yan speak about it. He had also lived these two years very bitterly.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge. I believe that by the time you return to the Jia Ma Empire, the Misty Cloud Sect will no longer be able to block you." Xun Er smiled and replied with a gentle voice a long while later.

Xiao Yan smiled faintly. He merely raised his head and eyed the vast starry sky.

At the corner of the wall, not far behind the two of them, Instructor Ruo Ling was leaning against a wall. Her chest slowly rose and fell, as her face was filled with shock.

Chapter 411: Bewildering

“It is really unexpected that the Misty Cloud Sect’s Yun Shan is actually still alive... it really has exceeded my expectations.” Xun Er’s expression changed following the faint words from Xiao Yan’s mouth. A long while later, her eyebrows were slightly vertical and a cold glint flashed across her autumn watery eyes while she softly said.

“It is indeed quite troublesome.” Xiao Yan also sighed softly. If it was not because of Yun Shan’s existence, the Misty Cloud Sect would not have been able to chase him until he had to flee all the way out of the Jia Ma Empire.

The corner of Xiao Yan’s eyes glanced at the dark, black corner of the wall, where one could make a turn, behind him. He heard the soft sound of footsteps, which were gradually leaving from that spot. Only then did he turn his head to look at Xun Er. His expression was serious as he said, “Xun Er, there is something that I need you to honestly tell me, because this is very important!”

“Oh?” Xun Er was startled when she heard this. When she saw Xiao Yan’s serious face, she immediately nodded and said, “As long as Xun Er knows, Xun Er will naturally not hide anything that Xiao Yan ge-ge wants to know.”

TL: ge-ge – elder brother or used to address an older male friend/relative (latter usually used affectionately by female)

“After the first time I have left the Misty Cloud Sect successfully, I was worried that the Misty Cloud Sect would implicate the Xiao clan because of their anger. The truth was indeed so. When I returned to Wu Tan City, the Xiao clan had already received the revenge of the First Elder of the Misty Cloud Sect.” Xiao Yan’s voice was slightly dark and cold.

Xun Er’s expression immediately changed when she heard Xiao Yan’s words. Her eyebrows were nearly vertical and her pupils contained some anger, “Isn’t this Misty Cloud Sect a little too bold? Did the clan suffer a serious blow?”

“There were some losses but they weren’t too serious. However, father was chased out of Wu Tan City by the three elders of the Misty Cloud Sect. From that day on, he has been missing.” Xiao Yan voice may have sounded extremely calm but his hand, between Xun Er’s, trembled slightly and still revealed the anger within his heart.

“Missing?” Xun Er was initially startled. Quickly following this, her face also turned dark and solemn for the first time. She clearly understood the position Xiao Zhan had in Xiao Yan’s heart. Therefore, she also came to a sudden realization as to why Xiao Yan would actually once again take the risk to charge into the Misty Cloud Sect after successfully leaving it.

“I think that Uncle Xiao Zhan should have landed in the hands of the Misty Cloud Sect, right?” Xun Er voiced her thoughts.

“No.” Xiao Yan gaze looked directly at Xun Er. He shook his head and said softly, “The First Elder of the Misty Cloud Sect, who chased after Father, has already been killed by me. Before he died, he said that while he was chasing after Father, Father had suddenly and strangely disappeared...”

“Disappeared?”

“That’s right. He disappeared under the eyes of the First Elder of the Misty Cloud Sect, who was chasing him...” Xiao Yan’s eyes focused intently at Xun Er’s face as he slowly said, “I guess that Father might not have disappeared by himself. Instead... he was captured by a mysterious strong person!”

“Mysterious strong person?” Xun Er’s willow eyebrows deepened further when she heard this. She lifted her head to eye Xiao Yan as she said, “What does Xiao Yan ge-ge wants to ask Xun Er?”

“Xun Er, I know that you are not someone from the Xiao clan and that your background is also extremely powerful. I don’t know exactly what kind of connection the strength behind you has with the Xiao clan, but I have my own source of information. Therefore, I guess that Father’s disappearance may perhaps be related to the faction behind you. I trust you. This has nothing to do with you. However, I need to find evidence

that my father is safe. Otherwise, I will have problems eating and sleeping peacefully.” Xiao Yan held Xun Er’s hand instead as he said in a deep voice.

Xiao Yan’s words caused Xun Er’s face to change a little. A long while later, she shook her head and said in an extremely calm manner: “That won’t be the case. It was definitely not them. They and the Xiao clan have a certain provision. Therefore, they will definitely not do something brash, like forcefully capturing a person! The binding power of this kind of provision is not as simple as what you imagine. Therefore, even if there was someone among them who did this, he would face severe opposition. Moreover... since that person is able to capture Uncle Xiao Zhan in front of a Dou Wang without letting anyone find out, that person’s strength must at least be of the Dou Huang class. During this period of time, I have not received any news regarding this.”

“No? With the exception of myself, no one in the Xiao clan has come across a strong person of the Dou Huang class. What is the use of other strong people inexplicably capturing my father? Only the faction behind you has some relationship with the Xiao clan that I am aware of. At the same time, they also possess this kind of strength!” With the guess in his heart being overthrown, the hand which Xiao Yan used to hold Xun Er’s hand abruptly tightened. There was an additional anger within his voice.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, Xun Er really did not lie to you. The faction behind me does indeed have some ties with the Xiao clan. At this moment, I cannot tell you some of the details and reasons for it. If I told you, it will instead be detrimental to you. However, regarding the matter of Uncle Xiao Zhan, Xun Er assures you that it is definitely not done by them!” Xun Er’s originally calm expression immediately crumbled when she saw Xiao Yan’s face, which contained a slight anger. She could not resist speaking in an aggrieved manner.

Seeing Xun Er’s face, which contained some grievance, Xiao Yan also gradually recovered some of his clear-headedness. His hands gently scratched his head and exhaled a deep breath of air while muttering, “Looks like there were some secrets within the Xiao clan which I was

unaware of. Alright, since you are unwilling to say anything, I shall not force you to. If it is really as you have said, and this was not done by the faction behind you, I'm afraid that the Misty Cloud Sect would still be the biggest suspect... That sect does not appear to be as simple as everyone thinks."

"Alright, you can go back and rest first. There is still the Qualifying Competition tomorrow. Temporarily put this matter regarding father aside. Although I am not certain about his current condition, his life should, at the very least, not be in any danger. Ah, I need to quickly raise my strength. Otherwise, even if I manage to find traces of my father in the future, I'm afraid that I also won't have the strength to retrieve him." Xiao Yan turned his head toward Xun Er. He patted her head, smiled, and spoke in a comforting manner.

"I will get someone to help investigate this matter and will immediately let you know if I have any clues." Xun Er nodded her head. Her delicate hands were suddenly intertwined together as her bright eyes looked at Xiao Yan. In a somewhat uncertain manner, she asked, "Xiao Yan ge-ge, will you blame Xun Er for not telling you the exact faction behind me, as well as their relationship with the Xiao clan?"

"Will you harm me?" Xiao Yan smiled, rubbed Xun Er's head and asked instead.

Xun Er was slightly startled. A smile appeared on her pretty face as she shook her head and whispered, "I won't."

"Therefore, I believe you. It is quite late, go get some rest." Xiao Yan extended his hand and hugged that soft, seemingly boneless, lovely figure for a moment. He immediately released her, waved his hand toward her, and finally turned around before walking to his room.

"Ah." Xun Er nodded her head slightly as she eyed Xiao Yan's back, which had disappeared at the door frame. She mused for a while before turning around, and swiftly walking back to her room. With a flipped of her hand, she closed the room's door and flicked her finger gently. A wisp of golden light shot toward a certain corner of the room. A dark, black

shadow immediately became distorted before turning into a black-colored human figure, appearing in the room, with one knee kneeling on the ground.

“Let Ling Shi go to the mountain behind the academy tomorrow. Additionally, send someone to inquire if there are any traces of a mysterious strong person within the Jia Ma Empire. Additionally, I need all the information regarding the Misty Cloud Sect!” Xun Er’s face was calm as she glanced at the black shadow. Her voice was clear and cold as she ordered.

“Yes, xiao-jie.” The black shadow did not voice any opposition when she heard Xun Er’s orders. Following the appearance of a soft, female voice, the body swayed and once again turned into a dark shadow, which melded into the darkness before completely disappearing.

TL: xiao-jie – young lady of a certain wealthy or powerful family.

Xun Er only slowly sigh in relief when she saw the black shadow disappearing. Her muttering voice softly resounded within the room, “Dammit, just who exactly did this? He actually set his eyes on Uncle Xiao Zhan?”

The faint, warm sunlight scattered down from the sky the next morning. Following the slow rise of the dazzling sunlight over the horizon, the academy, which had been quiet for the night, was once again filled with energy. Countless youthful men and women repeatedly swarmed out from all over the academy. Their destination was extremely clear. It was that large stadium at the middle of the academy.

The Qualifying Competition these two days seemed to be an annual grand event within Jia Nan Academy. Those who had the qualifications to participate in the Qualifying Competition were all people who belonged to the outstanding group. The giant competition between them was worth watching. Moreover, the Qualifying Competition this year still had the participation of Xiao Xun Er, Bai Shan, as well as the red-dressed young lady, who were among the most outstanding people in the academy. This fact alone gathered more than half of the viewers.

Of course, other than these three, the large Jia Nan Academy still had some other outstanding competitors. Among them, Xiao Yan, who was able to defeat his opponent by using a blitzkrieg-style method despite having just arrived, was naturally the one who was the focus of attention. Moreover, the intimate relationship, which existed between him and Xun Er, who was viewed by a countless number of male students as the goddess in their hearts, further caused numerous people to grit their teeth, wanting to see him embarrass himself.

After washing himself simply within the house, Xiao Yan, along with Instructor Ruo Ling, Xun Er, and Xiao Yu walked out of the house together. After which, they walked toward the stadium.

As the person who was the focus of attention in the academy, there were a countless number of gazes, containing various different kinds of emotions, being shot over during the journey, causing Xiao Yan's forehead to feel numb. Seeing his helpless expression, Xun Er by his side also could not resist laughing softly. Her lotus-like elegant and warm smile directly caused the sound of people swallowing saliva to sound from both sides of the path.

Under the scorching hot gazes the group continued on pretty soon Xiao Yan's group walked into the stadium, which was already crowded with people. After which, they walked toward their designated seats.

With Xun Er and Xiao Yan, this pair who attracted stares, the entire stadium's gazes were naturally instantly shifted over to them.

After sitting down at his designated seat, Xiao Yan brows suddenly twitched while conversing with Xun Er. He seemed to have sensed something as he raised his head and threw his gaze toward the viewing gallery on the opposite side. At that spot, which was an excellent viewing location, a white-clothed Bai Shan was standing, while holding his hands together. Seeing Xiao Yan's gaze looking over, the corner of his mouth was lifted into a faint, cold smile. His palm was on the guardrail in front of him, and his finger did a very obscure provoking action toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan eyes narrowed as he eyed the white-clothed, extremely

handsome, jade tree like Bai Shan. He smiled faintly as a thread of a cold glint flashed across his lowered, dark, black pupils. He had never boasted that he was a good person. Since the other party has provoked him repeatedly, then he would act in accordance with him...

Chapter 412: Rival

Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze from Bai Shan, who was on the opposite side of the arena. His gaze then swept across the surroundings of the stadium once more. In the middle of the viewing gallery, there were some good seats with the best views. Seated on these seats were merely four, white-haired, old men. Although the auras of these four people were no different from ordinary old men, Xiao Yan's gaze landed on their bodies first. Other people might not have sensed anything, but with his outstanding Spiritual Perception was able to faintly sense a vibration in space that occasionally surfaced from the surroundings of these four old men. This kind of spatial fluctuation was only created when the strength of the Dou Qi in one's body had reached a certain limit, which enabled it resonate within the space of the outside world.

Among the strong people whom Xiao Yan was acquainted with, even Hai Bodong had yet to achieve this level. Only those who had already entered the peak level of a Dou Huang, like Jia Xing Tian or the even stronger Yun Shan, were able to achieve this.

While Xiao Yan was observing these four old men, who were dressed in an extremely plain manner, the four of them suddenly appeared to have sensed something. Their originally lazy eyes were raised and turid gazes made contact with Xiao Yan's eyes. The few pair of eyes looked at one another and Xiao Yan eyes immediately felt a little pain. The Dou Qi in his body swiftly circulated before a wisp of green flame suddenly flashed across his black pupils. Only then did that painful feeling gradually weaken. Besides being shocked in his heart, he hurriedly retracted his gaze.

"Huh?" Just as the wisp of green-colored flame quietly flashed across Xiao Yan's eyes, a soft, shocked sound was spontaneously and simultaneously emitted from the four old men seated on those seats. Three among them exchanged glances with one another as they opened their mouths to speak, "What a strange Dou Qi. It is as hot and agile as a flame."

“This kind of Dou Qi is the best fuel to refine medicinal pills. It would really be a waste if Xiao Yan were not an alchemist.” A shock flashed across the eyes of an old man who was seated furthest left as he slowly said.

“Ke ke, Old Huo, I heard that this Xiao Yan had once become the champion of the Jia Ma Empire’s Grand Alchemist Meeting. His medicinal refining talent is quite great. If you can recruit him to your place to refine medicinal pills, I’m afraid that his achievements in the future would leave people speechless.” A gray-robed old man in the middle said with a smile.

“Ah, having such an achievement at only eighteen. His potential is extraordinary. He is indeed a good seedling. However, I think that he should already have his own teacher. Otherwise, he would definitely not be able to reach such a stage at this age with just his talent alone.” The old man, who was addressed as Old Huo, first nodded before he immediately replied.

“There is no conflict even if he already has a teacher. There is not much conflict between the academy and private teachers. Moreover, Jia Nan Academy’s Alchemist Department has been founded for so many years. If he can enter it and practice, there are many benefits for him. After all, no matter how vastly knowledgeable his teacher is, it would be difficult to compare with the many years of inheritance your Alchemist Department has, right?” The gray-robed old man shook his head and said with a smile.

“Besides, the Alchemist Department is independent of the Outer and Inner Academy and does not have much conflict with them. If this Xiao Yan were interested in coming to the Alchemist Department, I would not mind having another outstanding student.” Old Huo glanced at Xiao Yan in the distance and said faintly.

“Among the four of them, the three people, starting from the left, are the Deputy Headmaster of the Outer Academy and two elders who have quite great prestige in the academy. They have extremely great authority to speak in the Outer Academy. Moreover, their strengths are around that of the Dou Huang peak level.” When she saw Xiao Yan’s gaze, Instructor Ruo Ling, who stood beside him, explained softly, “The quiet old man, who isn’t

speaking much on the far right, is the Department Head of the Alchemist Department. He manages a large group of alchemists under him. Since an alchemist has a special position on the continent, the Alchemist Department is independent of the Inner and Outer Academy. There is no one who can interfere with their matters. Even the Deputy Headmaster cannot do so.”

“Alchemist Department?” Xiao Yan’s heart moved when he heard this name. This so called Alchemist Department was likely an existence that was similar to that of the Alchemist Association.

“The distribution of the faction in the Outer Academy is quite messy. Although I know that the strength which you are hiding is extremely strong, you need to be careful of two factions. One is the Law Enforcement Unit. There are as many strong people as there are clouds within the unit. Moreover, their unit’s position causes them to nearly have the authority to make unauthorized arrests. It is quite troublesome to offend them. The bloody fight between Jia Nan Academy and the ‘Black-Corner Region’ back then and finally the ‘Death Spirit Tree’, that gives people the creeps, were all their tactics... The other party would be the Alchemist Department. No matter what happens, an alchemist, no matter where he is, would be able to enjoy an extremely special position.” Instructor Ruo Ling sighed. There was some envy in her voice. The treatment of any random tier two alchemist within the Alchemist Department would far exceed that of hers as a Huang class instructor.

“Ah.” Xiao Yan nodded slightly as he firmly remembered these two faction in the academy within his heart.

“Additionally, I may have said yesterday that you only need to enter the top fifty in this Inner Academy Qualification but I think that with your true strength, you may perhaps try to break into the top five...” Instructor Ruo Ling smiled as she looked at Xiao Yan. She did not purposefully hide the fact that she had accidentally heard some things last night.

“Isn’t it all the same...” Xiao Yan smiled as he replied.

“It is not the same. If you are able to enter the top five in the Qualifying

Competition, you would have the qualification to enter into the academy's 'Book Collection Hall'." Xun Er continued on with a smile instead.

"'Book Collection Hall'? Are the things inside extremely attractive?" Xiao Yan was startled as he asked.

"I can only say that over half of the people participating in the Qualifying Competition have come with the intention of entering the 'Book Collection Hall'. Within them includes Xun Er, Bai Shan and the others." Xun Er exhaled like an orchard by Xiao Yan's side. Her smiling, warm and soft manner caused the surrounding gazes, which were looking at Xiao Yan, to suddenly become much hotter.

"The 'Book Collection Hall' is a forbidden place within the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy. Its defenses are extremely tight. Usually, other than a few countable people, who have the qualifications to enter, it is in a locked state most of the time. Only each year after the Qualification Competition is over will it once again open for a limited period of time." Xun Er said softly, "If someone is lucky, one would obtain a benefit that would be difficult to imagine from within it."

"Oh?" Xiao Yan lifted his eyebrows. With Xun Er's background, she still had such a high opinion of the mysterious 'Book Collection Hall'. In that case, the things inside should not disappoint him. He only nodded slightly after thinking about this manner within his heart. There was also some excitement within his heart as he said with a smile, "Since it is like this, then let us do our best. However, I shall say this before hand. Do not place too much hope on me. After all, there are quite a number of strong people in Jia Nan Academy."

"There should not be much problem with your strength. There are only five people you need to pay attention to during the Qualification Competition." Instructor Ruo Ling said with a laugh. There was a marvel within her laughter: "The first is that Little Witch. Her training talent is not any weaker than yours. Moreover, she has followed beside a strong person like the Deputy Headmaster for so many years. By being exposed to her surroundings, her knowledge far exceeds those of the same age group as her. The class of the Qi Technique and Dou Skills which she has

learned are also beyond the reach of an ordinary person. Additionally, her character is strange and unique and is unaffected by soft and hard tactics. She totally has the character of a little demon. However, it is fortunate that she does not have much interest in men, so you need not worry about being pestered by her. Of course... with your relation with Xun Er, she might vent her anger on you.”

“The second person is Bai Shan, whom you have met yesterday. As one of the most outstanding students and the one who received the greatest attention within the academy during these past two years, his strength is also extremely strong. It is not an exaggeration to call him a rival... the third is someone you have not met. However, that person belongs among the people of the ‘Law Enforcement Unit’, whom I have told you about earlier. Moreover, his position is quite high within it and has the trust of the current chief of the Law Enforcement Unit. Moreover, he is an orphan and will likely stay in this academy frequently. In the future, he might have the chance to take over the ‘Law Enforcement Unit’, such a strong faction, within his hands.”

“The fourth person is called Lu Mu. He is one of the top students in the Alchemist Department. Not only is his medicinal refining skill outstanding, but he is also similarly not weak in Dou Qi training. He is also an opponent that you cannot underestimate. You must also be especially carefully about him. This is because, according to the sequence, your opponent today might be him.” Instructor Ruo Ling reminded.

“Oh?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He inquired, “What class is that Lu Mu’s strength in?”

“Around a three star Da Dou Shi. However, that fellow is a complete ‘medicinal pot’. His Dou Qi is superficial and is nothing to be worried about.” Xiao Yu by the side suddenly pursed her lips and said.

“Ke ke, that Lu Mu is one of the top suitors of Xiao Yu. When she first entered the academy, that fellow disguised himself as a new student and brought Xiao Yu to wander randomly around the academy for over half a day. After which, Xiao Yu sensed something and directly kicked him into a pond. Who would expect that ever since that one kick, that fellow came

leaning over, repeatedly pestering Xiao Yu. Unfortunately, each time, he would be attacked until wounds covered all of his body. It is really fortunate that he is an alchemist. Otherwise, there would not be sufficient healing medicine for him to use.” Instructor Ruo Ling covered her mouth and laughed in a lovely manner.

A flush surfaced on Xiao Yu’s pretty face when she heard Instructor Ruo Ling’s teasing. She helplessly said, “Don’t mention that sticky candy which I cannot get rid of. He really irritates me to death.”

“Ah?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard the words of the two of them. His eyes immediately revealed a surprise as he eyed Xiao Yu and jokingly said, “Tsk ts. It is really unexpected that Elder Cousin Sister Xiao Yu is also quite charming. However, the fellow this time around appears to be a little better than that fellow from two years ago?”

“Hmph, do you think that everyone has the same eyesight as you? It is not that no one wants this lady...” Xiao Yu snorted when she saw the shock on Xiao Yan’s face.

Xiao Yan smiled and once again turned his gaze back to Instructor Ruo Ling. With a smile, he asked, “What about the last person?”

“As close as being in front of your eyes.” Instructor Ruo Ling craftily said.

“Uh?” Xiao Yan was startled. His gaze turned toward Xun Er. When he saw her saucy expression, he could not help but say with a bitter smile, “Indeed, a rival that must be taken seriously...”

Undoubtedly, the last person Instructor Ruo Ling had said that he needed to pay attention to was naturally the one with the most terrifying training talent and a mysteriously large background, Xun Er.

During the time that the few of them were laughing softly, the viewing gallery around the stadium was once again completely packed with students. Noisy sound directly broke through the clouds. The second day of the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition was finally about to begin.

Chapter 413: Fighting Lu Mu

When a middle-aged judge slowly walked onto the open ground, a deafening, ear-shocking cheer immediately erupted from the viewing gallery.

The cheer was suppressed by the judge's hand until it gradually calmed down. This middle-aged judge looked once around the place before saying in a clear voice, "All students, after yesterday's initial elimination and selection, there are one hundred and seventy four of the originally three hundred participants remaining today. From this number, the fifty names, which have the qualification to enter the Inner Academy, should be born today."

"Alright, it is time for the Qualifying Competition. We shall begin. Any competitor whose name has been called, please get in the arena as soon as possible. Once the stipulated time is over, we will handle it as you giving up." The middle-aged judge was not long-winded. After introducing the rules of the competition, he slowly withdrew to the judge's seats on the open ground. At this time, two names were emitted from the judges' seats.

"Xuan Class – Third Class, Luo Fu!"

"Xuan Class – Fifth Class, Ge Li!"

When they heard the names being read, the two of them, who were already prepared, immediately flashed and leaped down from the viewing gallery. They steadily landed almost instantly in the arena and looked at one another. Sparks shot out from their eyes. Dou Qi of different elements came surging out from their bodies in a turbulent fashion. Powerful Dou Qi covered the bodies of the two of them, forming two perfect Dou Qi cloaks.

Although the two people, who had got onto the arena, could not be compared to the outstanding individuals within the academy like Bai Shan and the others, they did at least have some fame. Therefore, waves of cheers sounded from the viewing gallery when the two of them got onto the stage. Those able to participate in the Qualifying Competition and last

until the second round could, at the very least, be considered to have middle to mid-upper strength within Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy, regardless of how one put it.

The two people in the arena were from the Xuan class. One of them used the agile and elegant wind element; while the other specialized in the heavy and calm earth element. One focused on nimble agility; the other on steady defense skills. The strength between the two, did not differ greatly and matched with different elements, this fight was destined to be a long, drawn out fight. Reality was also so. Ever since the competition had begun, that wind affinity student turned into a shadow that repeatedly flashed around the opponent, using his agile advantage. His palms were tricky as it directly struck the opponents lethal points. However, his attacks may have been sharp but his opponent was not mediocre. That body of his was like a rock touching the ground. With his large source of strength, he bitterly endured with that ground affinity Dou Qi, known for its long battle endurance. If one were to carefully observe, one would be able to discover that despite him appearing to be at a disadvantage, the sharp attacks of the opponent were reduced to dealing minimal damage.

The ruthless and fierce fight in the battleground, where one attacked and one defended, attracted most of the eyes of the stadium over. Numerous cries and cheers repeatedly aggregated together, finally forming something like a rolling thunder that resounded unceasingly in the sky above the open ground.

"Looks like that Luo Fu has a good chance of winning..." Xiao Yan leaned against the backrest of the chair and whispered with a smile, while eyeing that competitor, who used the smallest price to offset his opponent's attack.

"Isn't he being suppressed by Ge Li?" Xiao Yu muttered by the side.

"Those attack by Ge Li may appear fierce, but if he continues like this for a long time, his Dou Qi will ultimately be unable to support him. By observing the color of his Dou Qi, I think that the Qi Method which he practices isn't of a very high class. A low class Qi Method is unable to support this drain of his for a long time. On the other hand, Luo Du has

not even moved from his starting position that much since the beginning of the fight. Each time he came into contact with the opponent's attack, his feet would tremble slightly. That is an action which deflected the force into the ground. Although this defensive method was a little clumsy, it still allowed him to save a lot of unnecessary Dou Qi from being spent.

Therefore, if that Ge Li does not have too strong of a killing move, his attack might well gradually become weaker after another thirty exchanges, all the way until he is defeated." Xun Er by the side explained with a smile.

As they heard Xun Er explain in detail, not only Xiao Yu nodded, but even Xiao Yan also felt somewhat astonished as he eyed the girl. This was because even he did not see the battle with such detail.

"I wonder just what class this girl has reached after training for these two years. However, I think that she should definitely not be any weaker than me..." Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. He felt a little helpless.

Originally, he thought that his training speed during these two years was already quite good. It was really unexpected that this girl was even more abnormal. However, just thinking of the strength of mysterious faction behind Xun Er, which even Yao Lao was fearful of, he also calmed down. No matter how one put it, Xun Er's training talent was not weaker than his own. Additionally, she practiced tailor-made high class Qi Methods from youth. She also did not lack all those so-called "rare medicinal pills", and could beckon them with her hand. It was naturally much better than him, who needed to personally go and gather medicinal ingredients with great difficulty...

During the time that Xiao Yan was letting his imagination run wild, the battle situation within the arena had finally started to change. The student called Ge Li appeared to know that he was going to be in big trouble.

Therefore, after his wild attacks continued for a while, he finally reduced his attacking speed. However, just when he reduced his speed, that Lu Fu, who had not been moving who was like a tortoise hiding in his shell, suddenly unleashed his strength. A sharp Dou Technique attack, which was completely different from the defensive nature of his ground element, shook the opponent until he was forced to repeatedly pull back more than

ten steps after just one strike. A mouthful of fresh blood was spat out and Ge Li seemed to have lost his combat ability.

“Unmoving like a mountain, moving like a thunderbolt, defeating the opponent in one strike. Tsk tsk, this is indeed worthy of being Jia Nan Academy. The combat quality of the students is actually strong to such an extent. No wonder Instructor Ruo Ling really disliked him for not living up to expectations back then when he wanted to take leave. If it were not for Teacher quietly teaching me, just relying on myself to fumble through my training would likely mean that I would really have difficulty catching up with the training progress of the geniuses in this academy.” Xiao Yan felt astonished as he shook his head and sighed in his heart when he saw that one strike Luo Fu used to obtain victory.

Xiao Yan sighed once in his heart and once again placed his attention onto the arena. After the judge announced Luo Fu’s victory in the open ground, the two people, who had completely different feelings, left the open ground under countless number of gazes. The next fight quickly followed as the competition got into a full swing.

This competition with no intermittence also ultimately pushed the atmosphere of the gallery, surrounding the open ground, until it reached a high tide. Deafening cheers shook people’s ears until they began to hurt.

In Xiao Yan’s eyes, the fights that came one after another flashed past, like a walking horse observing the flowers. Xiao Yan had an increased solemnness toward Jia Nan Academy. This Qualifying Competition could roughly represent the strength of the top level students in the Jia Nan Academy’s Outer Academy. From the fights between these people, Xiao Yan could vaguely see that the teachings that Jia Nan Academy adopted toward its students were indeed something fierce. The fighting methods between the students were far from those old-fashioned ones that Xiao Yan had imagined. Instead, they were like combat experienced veterans. When they fought, their sight was sharp and vicious. Moreover, they did not show any mercy when it was time to throw a vicious blow. This somewhat dangerous competition had already exceeded the sparing level of an ordinary academy.

However, a truly outstanding person would definitely not be born from a gentle Ivory tower. Without abundant combat experience and sharp ruthless eyes, one would not have sufficient ability to become a truly strong person. Jia Nan Academy could be considered to have some ability to build this kind of atmosphere within the academy.

“The academy also lets some students enter the ‘Black-Corner Region’ each year to train. Although this action is very dangerous and has even resulted in the academy losing some outstanding talents during each training session, it must be said that the students, who successfully returned, appeared to have undergone a metamorphosis. This kind of transformation is not only displayed in their strength, but it is more of that kind of change in their temperament.” A soft voice suddenly transmitted from the side. Xiao Yan turned his head to take a look and found that it was from Instructor Ruo Ling.

“Uh? Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. It was a long while later before he nodded and said, “No wonder... that ‘Black-Corner Region’ is indeed a natural training ground. It is just that I did not expect the upper echelons of Jia Nan Academy to actually have such boldness. That is a place where even the bones of a person will be consumed.”

“The students who go and train can choose to go alone or go as a group, according to their wishes. However, there are very few who choose to go alone other than some people who have absolute confidence in their abilities. On the other hand, if one chooses to form a group, the academy will send an Inner Academy student to go with each group. This student will act as the group leader and lead them to walk out alive from that cruel training ground known as the ‘Black-Corner Region’.” Instructor Ruo Ling’s eyes were slightly absent minded as she slowly spoke, “That Bai Shan, Lu Mu, and the others had once entered the ‘Black-Corner Region’ and they did so alone. Therefore, do not underestimate them.”

Xiao Yan raised his eyebrows and glanced toward Bai Shan in the distance. He did not expect that this fellow had also walked through and encountered the ‘Black-Corner Region’.

During the time that Xiao Yan and Instructor Ruo Ling were conversing,

the competition in the arena also gradually reached its end. Following the announcement of the victor by the judge, the competitors, with one being seriously injured and the other suffering minor injuries, were supported by people as they withdrew.

“The thirty-eighth round: Alchemist Department Lu Mu against Huang Class – Second Class, Xiao Yan.”

A judge from the judges’ seats slowly stood up, and said with a clear voice after taking one look around the stadium.

As the voice of the judge fell, the noisy atmosphere immediately became quiet. Countless number of gazes immediately turned toward Xiao Yan. There was some feelings within those gazes. Of course, there were naturally a little more unfriendly ones.

“Looks like a lot of people are waiting to watch you embarrass yourself. After all, this Lu Mu cannot be compared with Xue Beng from yesterday. His strength can be considered within the top ten, even if placed in the entire Outer Academy. Moreover, I heard that he is able to control a flame that possesses quite a strong lethality, due to him being an alchemist. He is a troublesome person, you need to be careful...” Instructor Ruo Ling softly reminded as she eyed the surrounding gazes, which appeared to be gloating.

“Moreover, if you want to completely put an end to the kind of trouble similar to what Bai Shan did last night, the match of yours today is extremely crucial.”

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, do your best.” Xun Er smiled saucily and said from the side.

“Brat, you better not throw my face. If you are to lose to that troublesome fellow, you will be despised by me.” Xiao Yu waved her fist and warned.

“I will do my best.”

Xiao Yan smiled. Under the watch of everyone’s gazes, he slowly stood up and gently pressed his toes against the viewing gallery floor. His body

gently drifted and landed on the stage. His straight body, and the large Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back, formed an extremely mysterious picture.

An instant after Xiao Yan landed in the arena, a clear whistle suddenly sounded outside of the arena. A blue shadow instantly cut through the air and finally pressed his legs gently on the surrounding pillars of the arena, before somersaulting in midair and landing in it.

When that blue-clothed figure revealed himself, a tsunami of cheers immediately erupted from the viewing gallery in the surroundings. From the looks of it, there were many people in Jia Nan Academy who hoped Lu Mu would be able to suppress and defeat this Xiao Yan, who had just arrived at the academy, but had displayed great strength.

“This fight should be able to let Xiao Yan display all the limits of his body. That fellow Lu Mu is not like that Xue Beng yesterday.” The corner of Bai Shan’s mouth was lifted into a cold smile as he watched the two people in the arena indifferently. “I want to see just what ability you, Xiao Yan, has, to be together with Xun Er!”

“Fight, fight. It is the best that both of you fight until you are both crippled. In that case, Xun Er will not need to be ruined by Xiao Yan. Otherwise, I will have to fight.” On the other side of the viewing gallery, the red-clothed young lady glanced at the round today, which attracted the most attention while she curled her lips and said.

As various people had sinister motives in their hearts, a match, which was considered quite important to Xiao Yan, was finally about to begin.

Chapter 414: Playing With Fire

The scattered hair of the blue-clothed young man, appearing in front of Xiao Yan, was rolled down. A lazy expression hung on his face, while his body straightened. Although his appearance was not as handsome as Bai Shan, it could still give people a harmonious feeling in their hearts. A face that appeared harmless to human and animals made it extremely easy for people to let their guard down when they looked at him. It was little wonder why Xiao Yu, given her character, would be teased by this fellow when they met for the first time.

“You are Xiao Yan, right? Xiao Yu’s younger cousin brother?” While Xiao Yan was weighing the blue-clothed young man, the latter watched him with a smile and asked.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan only nodded slightly, and responded when he saw that this fellow did not display an expression similar to that of Bai Shan.

“Hee hee, we’re family, we’re family. Relax, brother Xiao Yan, I will hold back when the match begins in a little while and will definitely not cause you to be injured. Otherwise, I will be unlucky if Xiao Yu is infuriated.” Lu Mu immediately laughed when he saw Xiao Yan nodding his head and said with an extremely warm smile.

“Uh...” Xiao Yan was speechless when he heard these words. This fellow really acted familiar all by himself. He was able to pull their relationship to that extent despite this only being their first time meeting. How talented.

“Since it is like this, then I will thank Senior Lu Mu very much. However, I am also very interested in the top five spots. Is Senior Lu Mu willing to let me have it?” Xiao Yan laughed softly.

“Cough... Brother Xiao Yan, everything we do should be down to earth, so don’t be too ambitious. Even I don’t have much confidence to get into the top five. Although you have defeated Xue Beng, you should know that fellow’s strength can only be considered the average level in the Qualifying Competition.” Lu Mu’s face reddened as he coughed and said

with a smile after hearing Xiao Yan's words.

Xiao Yan could not resist smiling when he saw Lu Mu's performance. This fellow was also quite straightforward and was unlike that dark, cold character Bai Shan.

"Start!" At this moment, a middle-aged man from the judge's seat waved his hand and yelled in a clear voice.

"Senior Lu Mu, defeat Xiao Yan!"

"Let him know the strength of Jia Nan Academy!"

The middle-aged judge's voice had just fell when waves of cheers were emitted from the viewing gallery. However, most of those who shouted these words were males. Additionally, following this somewhat intense reaction by the male students, it caused some female students, who had some sympathy, to feel a little unhappy. No matter how one put it, the strength that Xiao Yan had displayed yesterday was sufficient to cause many to be shocked. Moreover, Xiao Yan was also not bad looking. His tall body, as well as the delicate and handsome face, also attracted many female gazes. Therefore, not long after those shouts to defeat Xiao Yan sounded, waves of orderly clear female cheers helped Xiao Yan raise his momentum.

"Ke ke, looks like this fellow Xiao Yan is quite liked by the girls. He has only been here for one day and there are already people cheering for him." Instructor Ruo Ling could not help but cover her mouth and laugh when she heard those lovely cries.

Xun Er also smiled gently by the side.

"Xiao Yan, defeat this medicinal pot!" Xiao Yu was carried by the two different types of cheers that had erupted on the open ground until her face turned red. She hurriedly placed her hands by the side of her mouth and shouted out loud.

Xiao Yan shook his head speechlessly as he heard the two opposing cheers in the stadium that entangled unceasingly with one another. He lifted his head, eyed Lu Mu on the opposite side and shrugged his

shoulders. His hand gently grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back. With a swash sound, the heavy ruler cut through the air and was tilted sideways as it pointed toward the ground. A green-colored Dou Qi began to slowly rise within his body and finally wrapped Xiao Yan's entire body within it. A powerful Qi spread out.

“Senior Lu Mu, please!”

Lu Mu was startled as he sensed the rising, powerful Qi within Xiao Yan's body. The lazy expression on his face immediately began to gradually disappear. Light from his storage ring flashed out and a metallic sword appeared. He gently lifted the sword and pointed it to Xiao Yan. With a serious expression, he said, “Seeing the Qi of Junior Xiao Yan, I think that you should have already advanced to the Da Dou Shi class, right? No wonder you could easily defeat Xue Beng yesterday. Your training talent is really outstanding.”

“I am also very interested in the top five spots and cannot give them to you. Therefore, I can only use all my strength!” As Lu Mu's voice fell, a powerful force, that was not much different from the one that came from Xiao Yan, surged out from within his body. After which, it turned into a cluster of red flames that wrapped Lu Mu within it. From a distance, the fiery red glow rolled and burned, much like a cluster of flame.

The two people in the arena now were completely isolated from the noise of the outside world. They were attentive, and their breathing was calm. As they exchanged glances with one another, the Dou Qi that covered their bodies appeared to be breathing as it repeatedly exhaled and shrunk.

The two people in the arena appeared to have remained quiet at the same time. A gentle wind swept past the arena and the swords rattled!

Seemingly having sensed the fight in the arena, which would erupt at the first move, the surrounding viewing gallery also became slightly quiet.

Two Qis, which had each shrouded half of the air within the arena, suddenly solidified. In an instant, everyone felt their eyes become blurry. Two shadows abruptly flashed. The sound of metal colliding and sparks

flying immediately erupted from the center of the arena.

Most of the people in the viewing gallery could only see vague black and blue figures in the arena, as well as hear the sound of air being split as the heavy ruler was swung. After which, they saw the crack lines on the rock surface, which were formed as it repeatedly trembled, due to the colliding of the Dou Qi in the arena. Although they could not see the exact battle, no one could deny the intensity of the fight from the two auras, which were of approximately the same level.

Within the arena, Xiao Yan's heavy ruler swung widely. He used the broad ruler's body and each time he waved, there would be the sound of strong compressed wind. At times, when it was filled with Dou Qi, the sharp force of the ruler's body would smash until crack lines appeared on the ground, even without coming into contact with it. From this, it could be seen just how terrifying the strength was when Xiao Yan swung the heavy ruler.

The metallic sword in Lu Mu's hand was the total opposite of Xiao Yan's big motion attacks. It was instead like a tricky, soft snake and did not come into contact with Xiao Yan's heavy ruler. Occasionally, when they did come into contact, he would pull back at the moment of contact and did not give the slightest opportunity for the heavy ruler to transmit the force over.

The human figures on the open ground flashed, and their Dou Qi collided violently. Numerous pillar-like Dou Qi waves would gush out from their palms and finally collide together, spreading out an energy ripple which swept away all the debris on the open ground.

"This fellow has very tight defense. Even with my sword speed, I am actually unable to make the slightest contact with him." The metallic sword in Lu Mu's hand came attacking in a lightning-like manner. Numerous afterimages, which carried a flaming red Dou Qi, surfaced in front of him. However, regardless of how fast Lu Mu attacked, that enormous ruler would instantly changed its direction. Xiao Yan borrowed the broadness of the ruler's body and its extremely hard material to easily block all ten plus afterimages.

As the fight between both parties prolonged, the laziness on Lu Mu's face had gradually disappeared. Only now was his face completely covered with a serious expression. The strength that Xiao Yan had displayed was sufficient to let him treat it with caution.

"Hu..." Lu Mu let out a long breath as his footsteps suddenly retreated slightly. His body immediately leaned forward and the fiery red Dou Qi on the surface of his body swiftly swarmed into the metallic sword. In an instant, a longsword, that contained a cold glint, was transformed into a flaming sword that emitted a high temperature.

A sleek redness also surged up onto Lu Mu's face following the change in the longsword. His hand suddenly trembled and a clear, thunderbolt-like sound appeared from his joints. as the fire sword in his hand pierced out explosively. The high temperature cut through the sky, and even carried a faint, charred smell.

Xiao Yan's eyes became cold when he sensed this change in the other party's longsword. His hands held the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly and with a low cry, the heavy ruler cast a shadow as it stood in front of him like a huge, black-colored wall.

"Clang!"

The fiery red longsword pierced toward the black-colored huge ruler. As this clear ring of the sword sounded, the peak of the sword suddenly bent. The longsword swayed along with the ruler's body and flashed out of the boundary where the black ruler could block it. The longsword violently cut upward and carried a fiery cold glint as it cut toward Xiao Yan's hand, which was holding the ruler's hilt tightly.

Xiao Yan was startled at the other party's longsword, which had suddenly transformed until it was as soft and gentle as a snake. His hand swiftly released the ruler's hilt but his body did not pull back. Instead, he abruptly charged forward.

When his hand left the Heavy Xuan Ruler, the Dou Qi, which was suppressed in Xiao Yan's body, immediately began to soar like a flood. His speed had also greatly increased by a few times as his body turned into a

black shadow, which missed the stunned face of Lu Mu in a lightning-like manner. At the moment when they passed each other, Xiao Yan's elbow abruptly smashed downward, which coincidentally smashed into Lu Mu's wrist. The fiery red longsword immediately fell. Lu Mu's hand, however, had become completely numb at this moment.

"Clang..." The longsword fell onto the ground as Lu Mu's body miserably rolled away, dodging the sharp kick, which Xiao Yan had unleashed from behind him.

Xiao Yan only slowly turned around when his attack was futile and appeared to give an unsmiling smile toward Lu Mu who had pulled back by more than ten steps.

The lightning swift exchange finally and abruptly became slow once more. When the students at the viewing gallery saw Lu Mu rolling a couple of times like a pastry, their faces were involuntarily filled with astonishment.

"What great speed. What strong force." Lu Mu's left hand lightly touched his wrist. He used his strength and gave a pull. The corner of his mouth shivered. After which, he shook his head with a face filled with amazement.

Xiao Yan smiled. He slowly walked toward the side of the Heavy Xuan Ruler. However, he did not place his hand on it.

"Ah, I have really underestimated you. Looks like I have no choice but to get serious." Lu Mu sighed. He extended his hands out of his clothes and his gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan as he said, "You should also know of my other identity. Alchemist... the thing I am good at is not Dou Qi... but rather playing with fire!"

Pride flashed across Lu Mu's face. His hands trembled and a deep, blue-colored flame instantly seeped out, and swiftly covered his hands within them. The high temperature caused his face to become a little illusionary.

Surprise flashed across Xiao Yan's eyes as he eyed the deep, blue flame, which had swarmed out of Lu Mu's hands. This should be a kind of 'Beast Flame'. However, the words that Lu Mu had said caused a strange,

laughable feeling to surface within his heart. Playing with fire? Hei, with his current flame controlling abilities, even a tier four alchemist would not dare to say something absurd like playing with fire in front of him.

“Brother Xiao Yan, you should be careful. This Blue Crystal Flame has once wounded a strong Dou Ling.”

Xiao Yan’s smile was strange as he raised his head and watched the proud face of Lu Mu. He nodded slightly and under a countless number of gazes, his long white hand also slipped slowly out of his black robe. After which, he obtained a purple-colored Danwan from his storage ring and stuffed it into his mouth. He then began chewing.

Xiao Yan chewed for a moment before his middle finger and thumb gently rubbed across each other. A clear snapping sound appeared in the stadium.

Following the rubbing movement of the two fingers, Xiao Yan opened his mouth. A cluster of purple flames were immediately spat out in front of many shocked eyeballs. His right hand swayed, and the purple-colored flame was suspended over his palm.

Xiao Yan eyed the purple-colored flame leaping like an elf before raising his face. His actions, caused the entire stadium to descend into a silence. On the opposite side, the originally proud faced Lu Mu had also become stunned at this moment.

“Ke ke, Senior Lu Mu. I’m sorry. What I specialized in is also not Dou Qi... but rather playing with fire!”

Chapter 415: Pill Flame Skill

Two figures were facing each other on the enormous open ground. The hands of the two of them were respectively shrouded by a deep blue and purple-colored flame. As the flames rose, they carried a high temperature that caused the space around the two of them to become a little twisted and illusionary.

The viewing gallery was completely silent as they watched the two different colored flames on the hands of the two of them. It was only a long while later before there was someone who released an exclamation of disbelief.

“Why can that Xiao Yan summon out an essence flame? Isn’t that something that can be only done by an alchemist or a strong person of the Dou Wang class and above?”

“Don’t tell me that this fellow is also an alchemist?”

“Purple colored flames, how beautiful...”

Numerous shocked sighs or doubtful voices repeatedly sounded on the viewing gallery around the open ground.

“Why does this brat also have this kind of flame?” Xiao Yu was also startled when she saw the change in situation within the arena. A moment later, she suddenly muttered, “That’s right, back then before he left, I heard that this fellow had a mysterious alchemist teacher. From the looks of it now, he should also be an alchemist? No wonder he can summon out an essence flame similar to Lu Mu’s.”

Xun Er, standing by the side, whose gaze had been staring at the arena, nodded slightly. According to Ling Ying’s report, she clearly knew in her heart that if Xiao Yan were to display all the trump cards which he currently held, it was likely that hardly any strong person of the same class within this academy would be able to defeat him. That Lu Mu may be considered a talented strong person who was hard to come by but he still did not possess too much of a threat from Xiao Yan’s point of view. The current Xiao Yan was far from that useless young man in the Xiao clan

back then, who endured looks of disdain and ridicule. Currently, the training talent he had would cause anyone to feel shocked!

On the other side of the viewing gallery, Bai Shan's expression had become a little darker and more solemn after Xiao Yan had summoned out the purple-colored flame. He also did not expect that the latter would actually possess such a powerful hidden card.

"Hee hee, Big Brother Bai Shan, you need not be worried. Even if that fellow has that kind of flame similar to Lu Mu, it does not mean that he is a match for you. Didn't that Lu Mu back then lose to you despite having that Blue Crystal Flame of his?" As Bai Shan's expression became slightly gloomy, a laughter that contained some flattery was emitted from his side. Bai Shan turned his head over to take a look. It was actually the few students from his class who usually followed him around. Bai Shan's face did not display any joy at these fawning words, which he liked. He merely nodded his head and said faintly, "The Blue Crystal Flame of Lu Mu's does indeed cause people to be afraid. Back then, I also relied on some luck when I defeated him. However, I wonder if his Blue Crystal Flame or that purple-colored flame is stronger."

"Regardless of whoever wins, they would only face the prospect of being eliminated when they meet Big Brother Bai Shan. When that time comes, Junior Xun Er would naturally know how outstanding Big Brother Bai Shan is. Her seemingly indifferent but haughty character would definitely not allow her to walk together with a failure. By then, Big Brother's wish would be fulfilled."

The corner of Bai Shan's mouth was lifted. No one got tired of hearing nice words. Moreover, the current him liked it the most when other people belittled Xiao Yan in front of him.

"Xiao Yan, I hope that you can defeat Lu Mu. Otherwise, won't it be less fun for me? I will utterly defeat you in front of Xun Er. I want to let you have no face to appear in front of Xun Er again!" A clear, cold laughter sounded in his heart. The smile on Bai Shan's face gradually turned warm. His hands hugged the front of his chest as he faintly watched the arena.

On the other side, that red-clothed young lady was similarly slightly shocked because of the Purple Flame which Xiao Yan had created. However, she quickly recovered. She quietly whispered to herself before throwing her focus into the arena. Compared to those fights earlier today, it was likely that this competition between Xiao Yan and Lu Mu would undoubtedly be the most interesting one. The haughty and arrogant her did not deny this point.

“Old Huo, how is it? Can you see what the origin of that Purple Flame of Xiao Yan’s is?” The Deputy Headmaster seated in the chair in the middle smiled as he eyed the old man of few words seated on his left.

“Seeing the thing which he had eaten earlier, I think it should be a medicinal pill or Yaowan that contained the seed of a wild flame. It is really unexpected that he could actually think of this method. However, this thing may appear easy to use but it is extremely difficult to control. There might be some difficulty if Xiao Yan wants to rely on this to contend with Lu Mu’s Blue Crystal Flame.” The old man called Old Huo mused for a moment before speaking slowly.

Although most of the information regarding Xiao Yan was known to the upper echelons of the Jia Nan Academy, they merely stopped at the rough record, etc. They did not know much about details similar to what kind of flames Xiao Yan possessed, or the finer details. Even though Jia Nan Academy had an information network that left one speechless, it could, after all, not find out everything that happened within the Jia Ma Empire, which was located tens of thousands of kilometers away. Due to them being pressed for time, the sources of information regarding Xiao Yan were mostly some information that their subordinates in their information network had gathered from the ordinary people of the empire. Moreover, there were many things about Xiao Yan which had not spread in that kind of place and in it’s place were baseless assertions that spread. Therefore, even the upper echelon of the Jia Ma Empire, which had obtained some information about Xiao Yan, were unaware just what kind of stage Xiao Yan’s control over the flame had reached.

This also predestined the heartfelt shock that they had felt today!

On the arena, Lu Mu also slowly recovered from the shock that the purple-colored flame above Xiao Yan's hand had given him. He looked deeply once at the black-robed young man as he asked with a smile, "I didn't expect to meet someone of the same occupation. I think that you should also be an alchemist, right?"

Xiao Yan nodded slightly without denying it.

"Although I don't know your exact tier as an alchemist, I think that it should at least be around tier two. This kind of talent is really shocking." Lu Mu sighed gently. The blue-colored flame in his hand immediately drifted slowly as he stared intently at the flame. A moment later, a surging combat intent seeped out of his body.

"Xiao Yan use your entire strength. Let me see exactly what extent you have reached with the fire that you specialize in!" Lu Mu inhaled a deep breath of air. He abruptly lifted his head and let out a stern cry. A fiery combat intent filled his eyes. As an alchemist, he could be unconcerned with losing to other people in terms of Dou Qi. However, he had an arrogance that belonged to him when it came to playing with fire!

As the stern cry fell, the blue-colored flame in Lu Mu's palm suddenly surged explosively. Finally, it turned into two blue-colored circular fire arcs. The fire arcs circled around Lu Mu's body like two blue snakes that possessed intelligence. They swam up and down, protecting him in their midst.

Xiao Yan's ten fingers intersected each other. He immediately pulled them apart. Between the ten fingers, ten tiny purple colored flame were like tiny whips that coiled around each other. They agilely linked into a long whip, where the purple colored flame was rising from. The long whip shook and was lashed at the ground. A charred, black trace immediately appeared on the hard rock surface.

The two people in the arena appeared to be performing their extremely beautiful flame controlling ability. Countless number of people exclaimed from the viewing gallery. Some of the girls even could not resist forming stars in their eyes. This kind of pretty and elegant fighting method caused

their hearts to have limitless yearnings toward this noble occupation known as alchemists.

Shock flashed across Lu Mu's face when he saw the extremely long flame whip in Xiao Yan's hand. The flame control ability of the other party was a little beyond his expectations. However, if it was only just to this point, it was still within the limit which he could handle.

Lu Mu's feet moved slightly. The heels of his feet were slightly raised and suddenly stomped downward an instant later. His body appeared to have transformed into a blue shadow that directly shot explosively toward Xiao Yan.

"Chi!" Xiao Yan's hand moved when he saw Lu Mu charging directly at him from the front. The long Purple Flame whip immediately turned into a vague, purple shadow that burst out. When the high temperature cut past the sky, it carried a strange sound, like hot oil meeting icy snow.

The attacking speed of the long Purple Flame whip was extremely quick. However, just as it was about to reach Lu Mu's body, those two blue-colored fire arcs, which shrouded the surface of his body, suddenly increased their speed. They collided heavily with the Purple Flame whip. In an instant, countless sparks exploded out from the two colored flames.

The sparks continued for an instant when the blue shadow shot out once again. Xiao Yan's long Purple Flame whip was actually completely blocked by Lu Mu's fire arcs!

Lu Mu's toes pushed and he shot into the region three meters from Xiao Yan's body. The corner of his mouth was curled and his hands opened and close. Blue-colored flames suddenly materialized and in a sudden and immediate manner, began spiraling upward. It formed a spiraling, conical flame, only the size of a palm in an extremely short amount of time!

"Hee hee, Xiao Yan, this is an alchemist attacking skill that is unique to our Alchemist Department. Using fire to turn into Qi. The force that erupts from it would not be any weaker than Dou Skills! In the Alchemist Department, we call this 'Pill Flame Skill'!" The conical swirling flame emitted a humming sound from within Lu Mu's palm. Lu Mu parted his

mouth and smiled. His palm suddenly smashed toward Xiao Yan's chest.

The tip of the conical flame was directly pointed at Xiao Yan. The sharp portion of the peak created a circular, blue-colored line of wind due to the high speed rotation, turning it into a swirl that appeared at the tip of the flame.

“‘Pill Flame skill’? The Alchemist Department here does indeed has some skill. It actually allows the alchemist to use a flame in this manner! No wonder even teacher gave such high praises for Jia Nan Academy. It does indeed has some outstanding places!” Xiao Yan clearly sensed the terrifying energy contained in the conical flame that was shooting explosively toward him. A shock flashed across his heart. Moving with his thoughts, the purple-colored flame whip in his hand instantly shrunk into a cluster of purple-colored flames. The flames wiggled swiftly and under Xiao Yan's abnormally great Spiritual Strength, the purple-colored flame cluster was divided into two in the blink of an eye. A large portion of it was forcefully constructed into a purple-colored flame curtain, while the other small portion was quietly rolled down along Xiao Yan's hand. Finally, it fell onto the ground like a dead snake without anyone noticing.

At this moment, that spiraling conical flame also finally carried a sharp wind splitting sound as it violently smashed into the flame curtain. An intense explosion immediately appeared. It carried a circle of two colored flame waves that erupted and surged out from the center of the arena. An instant later, the heat wave swept through the entire stadium. Those students in the surrounding viewing galleries could not resist turning their heads sideways to avoid the hot air that had suddenly appeared.

Within the arena where the flame wave exploded out, a blue figure suddenly shot back explosively. After his feet slid on the ground for a couple of meters, he finally raised his head and watched the spot where the flame wave had gradually disappeared. A moment later, the flame wave had completely disappeared, but he did not see a human figure within it.

Lu Mu was slightly startled when he saw this scene. He looked all around him when he suddenly realized that his arms and legs had a slight

searing feeling. As he hurriedly lowered his head, his eyes shrunk, realizing that his hands and feet had unknowingly been entangled by two purple-colored chains!

The two fire chains revolved around Lu Mu's hands and legs, much like two small snakes, while emitting a faint heat.

"Don't move. Otherwise, these fire chains will explode. Should that happen, you would not be able to keep your hands and legs." A faint voice suddenly sounded from behind Lu Mu, causing Lu Mu, who had just wanted to resist, to stiffen his entire body.

Lu Mu turned his head with some difficulty. He looked at Xiao Yan, who had unknowingly appeared behind him, and realized that the current him has his right palm slightly opened. Following the movement of his finger, Lu Mu could clearly sense that the temperature of the fire chains that bound his hands and legs had already gradually leaped.

"This fellow... is actually... actually able to control the flame in such an exquisite manner!" Lu Mu eyed Xiao Yan, who was around ten meters from him, but was actually still able to control the flame which had left his body. Shock flashed across Lu Mu's eyes. This kind of distance was something that not even an ordinary tier four alchemist could achieve!

Xiao Yan stood over ten meters away from Lu Mu on the arena while the latter was standing in the same spot with his entire body stiffened. There were a few chains formed by purple-colored flames on his body, which were slowly roaming over him, much like a rope which trapped him within and caused him to be afraid of making the slightest struggle.

In the surrounding viewing gallery, those students, who had just turned their heads away due to the wave of hot air, once again threw their gaze into the arena. However, they coincidentally ended up seeing this strange scene causing astonishment to immediately surface on their faces.

There were only a few countable people in the viewing gallery who had clearly seen how Lu Mu was defeated. Even Bai Shan and the others failed to discover. Therefore, his face was currently completely covered with shock.

“Good brat. Dividing the flame into two. One of them was used to defend and attract Lu Mu’s attention while the other was lying hidden underground, creating a trap and waiting for Lu Mu to step onto it. Although the trap was hidden quite coarsely, this was during combat and there was also the cover of flames. Who would spend a great effort to observe their feet. This kind of doing two things simultaneously requires quite a great amount of Spiritual Strength to complete. This Xiao Yan is worthy of being someone who became the champion of the Jia Ma Empire’s Alchemist Grand Meeting.” The Old Huo, in the middle viewing gallery, slowly exhaled. His face was filled with amazement.

“I have lost...” Lu Mu did not dare move his body. A long while later, he merely sighed, turned his head toward Xiao Yan and bitterly said.

Xiao Yan smiled when he heard this. He clapped his hands softly and the purple-colored flame surrounding Lu Mu’s body immediately transformed into nothingness. Xiao Yan’s unintentionally revealing this caused Lu Mu to laugh bitterly once again.

“This Alchemist Department’s ‘Pill Flame Skill’ is also very strong. If I had not used the Dou Qi to agglomerate a small part of the Dou Qi Armor in front of my chest earlier, I would not have been able to block Lu Mu’s Spiraling Conical Flame with just the Purple Flame curtain. Looks like if I have the chance in the future, I should study the ‘Pill Flame Skills’. Should I be able to practice it, there would be some additional tactics when I fight with others in the future.” Xiao Yan lowered his head and eyed his black robe, where a hole had been burned while muttering in his heart.

“This match is won by Xiao Yan of the Huang Class – Second Class!” A clear voice from the judge’s seats was once again emitted.

“Boom!”

As the voice of the judge fell, a cheer that came from all direction immediately sounded. The fight between two alchemists today was an eye opener for them!

The name Xiao Yan, would perhaps begin to spread within the entire academy from this moment on. Only until this moment did those doubts

about Xun Er's judgement begin to completely disappear. No matter how one put it, a person who not only had an outstanding training talent in terms of Dou Qi but also had a great gift in terms of refining medicine, was someone that one could hardly find, even if placed in the entire Outer Academy!

The Xiao Yan today had truly become famous after one battle!

Chapter 416: Law Enforcement Unit : Wu Hao

As he heard the thunder-like cheers that sounded from the surrounding viewing gallery, Xiao Yan smiled as he cupped his hands together and said to the bitter looking Lu Mu, “Thank you Senior Lu Mu for going easy on me.”

“What going easy, a loss is a loss. There is nothing to give in. My open mindedness is not something that most people can compare with.” Lu Mu rolled his eyes and immediately said with a bitter smile, “But little fellow, I did not expect that you were actually hiding your strength so deeply. You might really be able to enter the top five. I will come seek your advice should there be a chance in the future.”

Once he said that, Lu Mu cupped his hands at Xiao Yan, turned his body toward the exit of the stadium, and walked over in an extremely decisive manner.

“This person is also quite honest and is much better when compared to that Bai Shan. I can befriend him if there is an opportunity.” Xiao Yan eyed that back, and smiled faintly. He lifted his head, and glanced in the direction where Bai Shan was seated, coincidentally coming into contact with the coldness in the other party’s eyes. At that instant, the dislike and caution Xiao Yan had toward this person became much denser.

Xiao Yan inserted the Heavy Xuan Ruler onto his back, turned around and descended from the competition stage. After which, he entered the area where the Huang Class – Second Class was seated, under countless number of heated gazes, only to find that a group of young ladies, whom he had only seen once yesterday, had appeared there. When these lively young ladies saw Xiao Yan return, their eyes immediately became starry as they went forward to surround him. Their chattering voices caused Xiao Yan, who had just had a big fight, to feel a little giddy.

“Alright, alright, all of you quiet down.” Seeing Xiao Yan being surrounded by this group of pretty and lovely young ladies, Instructor Ruo

Ling helplessly shook her head. She could only speak and pull the minds of these young ladies with worshipful looks back.

“Ha ha, no wonder Xun Er jie-jie never paid attention to any other man during these two years in the academy. You actually had such an outstanding person in your heart.” A young lady leaped to Xun Er side, and teased with a lovely laugh.

TL: jie-jie – older sister/ older female friend

As she heard this, an alluring blush surfaced on Xun Er's exquisite face. The instant, charming style of hers caused even Instructor Ruo Ling, who stood beside her, to feel her heart move, let alone those male students around them whose eyes had suddenly straightened.

Xiao Yan smiled and took two steps forward to sit beside Xun Er. He sniffed the body fragrance transmitted from the young lady beside him and sensed the jealous envious gazes shot from around him, causing him to be unable to help but suddenly feel slightly absent minded. Back then, during the period of time in Wu Tan City, when he was a useless person, the surrounding gazes were always filled with ridicule and superciliousness when he walked with Xun Er. At that time, it was likely that those people were thinking in their eyes: Did this toad not feel ashamed by walking next to a beautiful swan?

Now, after two years of tough training, there was no longer anyone who used the look back then to look at him when he walked beside Xun Er again. This was because the talent and strength that Xiao Yan had currently displayed completely gave him the qualification to be comparable to Xun Er, this girl favored by the heavens.

This was the difference between having ability, and not having it!

Back then, he had always said at every single moment that he was working hard for the three year agreement. However, deep within his heart, he was also thinking of working hard and raising his own strength, so that there would no longer be anyone who would use that kind of expression to look down at him when he was together with Xun Er in the future.

Three years had already passed since the time that he had been a useless person. During these three years, Xiao Yan relied on his own effort to fulfill his desire to successfully defeat Nalan Yanran, and allowed himself to possess the qualification to be together with Xun Er!

Xiao Yan let out a long breath. He tilted his head to eye Xun Er, whose gaze was staring at the competition within the arena. Being shone under the faint sunlight, the current Xun Er was almost completely wrapped in a circular golden light, appearing quiet and gentle, much like a beautiful picture. This caused an intoxication, which rose from his heart, to flash across Xiao Yan's eyes. The two years of lonely training had allowed Xiao Yan to understand that the girl in front of him was the one who possessed the deepest imprint within his heart!

This imprint was firmly imprinted when he was young. Actually, Xun Er had always said that if it were not for the ignorant Xiao Yan charging into her room when they were children, and using his Dou Qi, which he was totally unskilled in, to warm her seemingly weak body and persisting to do so for a couple of years, how would she have completely placed Xiao Yan deep within her heart? However, she had also maintained the same warmth and respect toward Xiao Yan when he was in his most despondent moments, causing that inner heart of Xiao Yan, which far exceeded those of his age, to completely open up toward this girl who only displayed her kindness and cuteness to him.

Xiao Yan's hand slowly moved along under the table and extended over. He finally grabbed Xun Er's seemingly boneless, small hands and felt the delicate and smooth palm. The inner heart of Xiao Yan gently trembled.

Xun Er's lovely body gently shook when Xiao Yan suddenly grasped her small hand. She used her gaze and appeared somewhat guilty as she looked at Instructor Ruo Ling, Xiao Yu, and the others nearby. She only sighed in relief when she saw that none of them had discovered Xiao Yan's action. Turning her head toward Xiao Yan, she said in a soft, annoyed manner, "Xiao Yan ge-ge."

"You are mine. No matter how large the faction behind you is, I will definitely not give up!" The hand, which held that delicate small hand,

slightly tightened. Xiao Yan used a voice that only the two of them could hear as he slowly spoke. Although his voice was calm, it was not difficult to hear an overbearingness and determination from within it.

Xun Er was initially startled when she heard Xiao Yan's words. A blood redness, like that of dawn, immediately and suddenly rose up onto her snow-white exquisite face. She did not expect that Xiao Yan would actually say such words of love that contained a very rich, hidden meaning at this moment.

Even with Xun Er's indifferentness, she also could not act as though nothing had happened under these sudden words of Xiao Yan's. Her face was as red as an apple. For the first time in all these years, a wave that could not be hidden rose within her heart, which was rippleless, like an old well.

"Xun Er, is something wrong?" Xun Er's unusual expression did not escape Instructor Ruo Ling's gaze at the side. She was initially startled before her gaze immediately drifted downward and coincidentally saw Xiao Yan's hand, which was hurriedly being pulled back. A sleek redness had also similarly swarmed up onto his face. She helplessly shook her head and appeared to talk to herself: "Young one, you should control yourself in public. Although I know your relationship with Xun Er is an intimate one, you should not provoke those male students who have intentions toward Xun Er in such a public place. If you do you will provoke a riot, I want to see if you can withstand a thousand people by yourself."

Xiao Yan smiled awkwardly, but did not dare to interrupt. He hurriedly threw his gaze toward the intense battle in the arena.

Beside him Xun Er also swiftly withdrew her rolling heart, as she guiltily glanced at Instructor Ruo Ling by her side. After which, she also threw her gaze back toward the arena, where a fight was taking place.

"Ah, this girl. She is able to be so indifferent when faced with an outsider, but in front of Xiao Yan, she is no different from a little girl in love. It really is one person surrendering to another. I really don't know how this fellow Xiao Yan managed to hook away the heart of a girl like

Xun Er.” Instructor Ruo Ling saw the remaining redness, that was still present on Xun Er’s face, and shook her head while bitterly smiling in her heart.

TL: one thing surrendering to another thing – everything in this world has a weakness

As the names sounded from the judge’s mouth, many human figures repeatedly flashed onto the arena. After undergoing an intense or boring fight, the victor would have an excited face, while the loser would withdraw from the arena in a dejected manner.

As one round after one round of competition passed, the originally one hundred and seventy plus people had gradually been eliminated until there were only sixty plus people left. If this continued for another few round, it was likely that the names of those who had the qualification to enter the Inner Academy would be born.

“The forty-first round: Xuan Class – First Class, Yan Cheng... Law Enforcement Unit, Wu Hao!”

When the names for the next fight in the arena were announced again, however, the stadium suddenly became a lot quieter. Under the pressure of a certain renown name, the students in the viewing gallery could not help but lower their voices.

“Law Enforcement Unit, Wu Hao...” Xiao Yan slowly repeated this name. He turned his head toward Instructor Ruo Ling and said, “I think that this should be that person whom Instructor mentioned the other day?”

“Ah.” Instructor Ruo Ling’s face became a little more grave. She softly said, “This Wu Hao has quite a great reputation in the Law Enforcement Unit. The number of people from the ‘Black-Corner Region’ who died to his hands during these past two years is at least over a hundred. His strength is quite frightening.”

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. Looks like this would indeed be a difficult rival.

“Additionally, I shall tell you something that will give you headache. This

Wu Hao once wooed Xun Er, and even directly voiced his intentions in public. However, he was later rejected by Xun Er. Nevertheless, this fellow does not seem to have given up.” Instructor Ruo Ling teased, “Before you have arrived at the academy, this Wu Hao was viewed by Bai Shan as his strongest love rival. Unfortunately, these two people, who were thought of by a countless number of people in the academy as the ones most likely to woo Xun Er, failed because of your appearance.”

“Beautiful women are the root of trouble.” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly as he shook his head. His gaze was immediately thrown to the arena. At this moment, there was already a young man standing within it. With his outstanding eyesight, Xiao Yan was able to clearly see the bitterness on this young man’s face.

“He is able to cause his opponents to feel fear within their hearts before even appearing. This Wu Hao...” Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. His eyes, which were staring at the arena, shrunk. On the opposite side of the young man, there was a human figure, whose entire body was wrapped in a blood-red robe, standing on the originally empty rock surface. It appeared like he was a ghost which had suddenly appeared.

“What frightening speed. This person is very strong!” Xiao Yan’s eyes stared intently at the blood-red human figure, and a rare seriousness swept across his face.

The moment the blood-robed human figure appeared, the originally noisy stadium suddenly became quiet. A bloody scent slowly permeated the entire open ground.

Chapter 417: Challenge

The noisy open ground had become much quieter following the appearance of the blood-robed figure. When the bloody scent came spreading out, some of the students, whose strength was still inferior, felt a chill all over their body despite the sun hanging high in the sky at this moment.

“I’m afraid that this fellow has just returned from performing his mission. This bloody aura is even more dense than those fellows from the ‘Black-Corner Region’.” The red-clothed young lady’s eyebrows became vertical. Her pupils directly eyed the blood-robed human figure while she spoke softly.

“He has indeed managed to hurry back, huh...” The originally smile filled face of Bai Shan became slightly darker and more solemn when he saw the blood-robed human figure appear. In the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy, the one which he feared the most was not the Little Witch, who caused the expressions of others to change when they heard her name, nor was it Xun Er, whose character was indifferent, but strength was great and unfathomable. Instead, it was this man, whose body was filled with a bloody aura!

During these two years, Bai Shan and Wu Hao had openly and secretly exchanged blows more than ten times. Unfortunately, each time, he did not obtain victory. The other person’s aura, which was composed of an intent to kill for the sake of killing, was really too frightening. Bai Shan could foresee that if Wu Hao were given sufficient time to grow, it was likely that his achievements in the future would be extremely terrifying. In the countless number of clashes between Jia Nan Academy, and the ‘Black-Corner Region’ during these few years, this blood-robed man was bathed in blood all the way as he stepped over a countless number of corpses. He activated and maximized his potential in those brutal life and death battles. One step at a time, he walked from being an ordinary member of the Law Enforcement Unit to the level he was now!

In the Law Enforcement Unit, this man had a nickname that caused

people to respect and fear: Blood Demon! A fierce name that was formed from blood and a countless number of corpses.

“What a dense bloody aura. Ah, Wu Tian Liang, that lunatic. Does he really want to train Wu Hao into a person who exists for the sole purpose of killing people?” On the seats in the middle of the stadium, a yellow-robed old man frowned and said, “If this continues, Wu Hao would sooner or later lose his reasoning due to his killing aura being too rich.”

“I don’t think so. Although Wu Tian Liang may be eccentric and vicious, he has always viewed Wu Hao as his own child. I think that by letting him come to participate in the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, he wants to let Wu Hao temporarily take leave from the Law Enforcement Unit. The Inner Academy, where all sorts of weird, talented individuals gather, should be able to suppress Wu Hao, whose character is indifferent and who views human lives as worthless.” The Deputy Headmaster mused for a moment before slowly speaking.

“Hopefully... if such an outstanding seedling were to be damaged, that would be a great loss to the academy.” The old man earlier sighed again before he replied.

“That’s right. Back then, even the Headmaster personally said that if Wu Hao is given ten years and his reasoning is able to remain uncorroded by the bloody aura, his strength might well reach an extremely strong stage.” The old man who was called Old Huo also nodded slightly as he spoke.

“Ke ke, looks like there are quite a number of extremely outstanding seeded competitors in the Qualifying Competition this year.” The Deputy Headmaster smiled and said, “Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Xun Er, and that Xiao Yan who had appeared out of nowhere. Looking at the strength displayed by these few people, this year’s one is of far higher quality.”

“You have forgotten about that Little Witch of your family that gives people a headache. How many people in this Outer Academy are not afraid of her?” The old man on one side rolled his eyes and said.

The Deputy Headmaster laughed bitterly when he heard this. His gaze was turned toward one spot on the viewing gallery. As he eyed the red

clothed young lady leaning on the guardrail, his eyes pulsed and suddenly said in a flustered and exasperated manner, "I am extremely satisfied with her talent. However, that character of hers causes people to be afraid of paying compliments. The old me is still waiting for her to find a good man to birth a baby and continue the family line. Who would have thought that she... actually pays no attention to men!"

The three old men could not resist laughing involuntarily when they heard these words of him.

"That Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Lu Mu, or even Xiao Yan. All of them are talents that one could rarely find. Among the younger generation, they belong to the exceptionally outstanding class. After the Qualifying Competition is over and they enter the inner academy, the first five will have a special examination according to the rules. When that time comes, I think that Jia Hu would be a little moved after living with them for some time." The old man beside the Deputy Headmaster comforted with a smile. Hu Jia, was likely the name of that red-clothed young lady.

"Bai Shan's talent is indeed not bad, but his open-mindedness is a little inferior. Wu Hao is dedicated to fighting and killing. During these years, I have never seen him have any feelings for any girl with the exception of Xun Er. As for Lu Mu, the person he likes is not the type of girl like Hu Jia. We don't even need to bother mentioning about Xiao Yan. With that kind of beautiful and outstanding girl like Xun Er, would he go and love another person?" The Deputy Headmaster shook his head and smiled bitterly.

Hearing this, the three old men could only display completely helpless expressions.

The Deputy Headmaster sighed and threw out this problem which gave him a headache. His gaze was once again focused on the competition.

Following the appearance of Wu Hao, who was wearing a blood robe in the arena, the judge waited for a moment before shouting the catchword for the competition to begin.

The cry of the judge had just fell when Wu Hao's opponent hurriedly

withdrew more than ten steps. The Dou Qi circulated swiftly through his body, and finally formed a Dou Qi cloak on the surface of his body. He gripped his weapon tightly in his hand as his gaze stared intently at Wu Hao, who remained still across from him. He had not even blinked once.

The students in the viewing gallery around the arena did not let out any mocking laughter when they saw this action of his. During these few years, the name of the Blood Demon Wu Hao was not any less famous than the Little Witch Hu Jia, or Xun Er within the Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy. From a certain angle, Wu Hao may have even greatly surpassed the two of them.

The blood robe moved slightly. There was a pair of pupils filled with killing intent, much like a bloodthirsty pack of wolves in the grassland. Just this pair of eyes, which did not contain any emotion, caused his opponent to feel that his head had become a little numb while his hand was drenched with perspiration.

"Are you not going to concede?" A hoarse voice slowly sounded from under the blood robe .

Hearing this, the expression of the competitor called Yan Cheng became a little ugly. He gritted his teeth and said with a strong front while feeling weak inside, "Just attack. I want to see just how strong the Blood Demon actually is!"

After saying this, it appeared that Yan Cheng was afraid that if he continued the face off, he would sooner or later lose the courage to fight in front of everyone's gazes. Immediately, he stepped off the ground and his body shot explosively toward Wu Hao. With the increase of the Dou Qi in the sharp weapon within his hand, he directly cut open the air.

The blood-robed figure did not even move when faced with Yan Cheng's attack, which contained a hint of anger. However, just as the attack was about to strike his body, his body suddenly waved. The human figure instantly disappeared in a bizarre manner.

Yan Cheng's attack missed and he shrank his eyes. Without any hesitation, the weapon in his hand once again pierced toward his back.

“Clang!” The tip of the sword, which was made of steel, had just pierced toward his back when a blood-red colored heavy sword appeared out of nowhere, easily blocking the sword in front of him. The heavy sword was quite large in size, with its body being around three inch wide. It was almost comparable to Xiao Yan’s Heavy Xuan Ruler.

As one heard the sound of compressed wind emitted when the heavy sword was swung, it was likely that the weight of the sword could not be underestimated.

The two swords came into contact. With a random gentle swing of the heavy sword, the force contained on it shook the longsword in Yan Chang’s hand until it flew out of his grasp. The latter used all his strength to hold onto it. Not only did he not succeeded, but the area between his thumb and index finger was convulsed by the enormous strength on the sword until it broke open, fresh blood flowed.

In their first exchange, a weapon was brought down. This scene caused even Xiao Yan who sat in the viewing gallery to feel a little surprise. No matter how one put it, that Yan Cheng was also a five star Dou Shi.

Astonishment flashed across Yan Cheng’s face as his weapon fell. His feet swiftly withdrew and had just pulled back about ten meters when he suddenly felt a cold air flowing behind him. Before he had the time to react, a heavy sword, containing a blood color, was fixed onto his neck. The thick, cold air that was emitted from the sharp edge of the sword caused Yan Cheng’s body to instantly stiffen.

In just two exchanges, that Yan Cheng, who had the strength of a five star Dou Shi, was defeated. This kind of result caused an uproar to sound throughout the stadium. Although there was hardly anyone who held the extravagant hope that Yan Cheng could defeat Wu Hao, no one expected that Yan Cheng could only endure two exchanges before a sword was placed against his neck...

“What a fast speed...” As Xiao Yan watched Wu Hao in the arena holding a blood-colored heavy sword while calmly standing behind Yan Cheng, some seriousness surfaced on Xiao Yan’s face.

“The thing that Wu Hao is best at is speed. Moreover, he also practices a Xuan Class High Level Agility Dou Technique: ‘Blood Shadow Flash’. He has borrowed the unique effect of this Agility Dou Technique in order to appear behind Yan Cheng without leaving a trace earlier. Moreover, his strength is also extremely strong. This can be clearly seen from how he lifts that large heavy sword and waves it around in his hand as though it is something light.” Xun Er, by his side softly revealed some of the information regarding Wu Hao. She was also a little worried that Xiao Yan would be at a disadvantage, due to not having sufficient information should he end up facing Wu Hao.

“His speed and strength are not weak... Isn’t that quite similar to me?” Xiao Yan lifted his eyebrows and glanced at the heavy sword in Wu Hao’s hand. He then glanced at the Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back. The two were similarly heavy type weapons. If the two of them were to fight, it would be a match of speed against speed, strength against strength. A breathtaking battle that would leave everyone speechless.

“This fellow seems to be an opponent that is even more formidable than Bai Shan. I must be more cautious toward this person in the future.”

“不愧是迦南学院啊，年轻强者层出不穷，若非我经过这两年的苦修，还真是难以赶上这些bt家伙。”萧炎惊叹的道，在加玛帝国历练时，年轻一辈中，除了纳兰嫣然借助着宗门所助，能与她相提并论之外，便是很少遇见其他之人，然而如今这才来迦南学院没几天，旗鼓相当的对手，便是屡屡出现，这不得不让萧炎有些感叹，这里的确是天才的聚集地啊！

“It is indeed worthy being the Jia Nan Academy. Strong young people emerge endlessly from this place. If I had not undergone the tough training these two years, it would really be difficult to catch up with these abnormal fellows.” Xiao Yan exclaimed. When he was training in the Jia Ma Empire, other than Nanlan Yanran, who had borrowed help from her sect, he had seldom met anyone else among the younger generation who was on par with him. However, he had only arrived at Jia Nan Academy a few days ago, when opponents who were well-matched with him appeared frequently. This caused Xiao Yan to be unable to help but sigh emotionally. This place was really where the talented gather!

At the moment Wu Hao placed the heavy sword on his opponent's neck within the arena, a judge hurriedly shouted the phrase for the competition to end. The Qualifying Competition can tolerate injuries but the academy did not wish to see deaths. Therefore, there was a rule in the competition that one could not deal a killing blow when the other party did not have any ability to resist. Otherwise, he would be severely punished. This rule was something that other people may comply with but for Wu Hao, who was used to killing people, it was merely something in passing. Therefore, that judge did not dare to delay. He was afraid that if his shout was a mere second late, another bright redness would be added to that heavy sword, which was already tainted with countless amounts of fresh blood.

The blood-colored heavy sword in Wu Hao's hand trembled slightly when he heard the judge's cry. He immediately slowly pulled it back. As the heavy sword left, that Yan Cheng's entire body became exhausted as he collapsed while repeatedly panting.

Wu Hao ignored Yan Cheng who knelt next to his leg. His blood-red robe shook slightly, and a pair of indifferent eyes slowly moved up along the viewing gallery. Finally, he stopped at the place where the Huang Class – Second Class was watching from. More accurately speaking, it should be that it stopped at Xiao Yan, who sat beside Xun Er.

Under the focus of a countless number of gazes present, he lifted the blood-colored heavy sword in his hand. Finally, he pointed at Xiao Yan from a distance. His hoarse, indifferent voice resounded throughout the stadium.

“You are Xiao Yan?”

“Do you dare to come down and have a fight with me?”

The indifferent, hoarse voice caused the entire viewing gallery to be startled. Immediately, countless number of gazes gave out a ‘swish’ sound as they turned toward the black-robed young man not far away!

Chapter 418: Heirloom Jade Piece

Wu Hao's hoarse, indifferent voice focused all of the gazes in the stadium onto the black-robed young man. These gazes were filled with a gloating feeling, expectations and all sorts of other emotions. Regardless of what it was, the sentence Wu Hao had just said caused Xiao Yan to be the focus of attention in the entire arena.

Xiao Yan's gaze stared intently at the blood-robed human figure in the arena. His eyes narrowed before he immediately stood up slowly in front of the countless number of gazes. There was not the slightest hint of fear on his face, even when faced by the great strength of his opponent.

The two sets of gazes met in midair, and faint, powerful Dou Qi simultaneously surged out of the bodies of the two of them without any prior agreement. A slight energy ripple also spread out from the surface of the two people's bodies. This was the phenomenon created by Dou Qi swiftly circulating within their bodies.

Seeing the two of them, who were steadily beginning to face each other with their force, the students in the surrounding viewing gallery immediately got excited. If these two people were to fight, it would definitely be a fierce battle.

Xun Er frowned slightly by Xiao Yan's side. She opened her mouth. That hesitating manner of hers where she hovered before speaking, otherwise revealed her desire to stop Xiao Yan, but at the same time worried that if she was to speak, those students would think that Xiao Yan only knew how to hide behind a woman. Therefore, the words that came to her mouth were finally not voiced.

"Hee hee, fight. It would be best if the both of you end up suffering serious injuries and letting me save some energy." Bai Shan coldly smiled and watched the two people facing off against each other from the other side of the viewing gallery.

"It would be really fun if they were to really fight. Unfortunately, that old fellow will definitely not let such a thing happen." The red-clothed young

lady placed her hands on the guardrail. Her gaze swept across Xiao Yan and Wu Hao as she said regretfully.

Seemingly accompanying her thoughts, an old cry suddenly sounded, just as the force of Xiao Yan and Wu Hao in the stadium gradually escalated. The voice suddenly shook the force that the two of them took much effort to raise until nothing was left.

“The both of you better follow the rules and not create any trouble. Now is the Qualifying Competition, not a place for the both of you to privately challenge one another!”

The force which the two of them had already brewed was forcefully shattered, causing Xiao Yan’s and Wu Hao’s bodies to tremble. Each of them immediately took a step back. They lifted their gaze and looked in the direction of the voice, only to find a white-haired old man, who carried a fury on his face at the middle position.

“That is the Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan. Other than the Headmaster, he has the greatest authority in the Outer Academy. Do not contradict him. Otherwise, it would not be good if you leave a bad impression.” Xun Er’s soft voice suddenly sounded by Xiao Yan’s ear.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. His gaze paused for an instant on Wu Hao’s body in the arena before he lowered his gaze and slowly sat back down.

“Wu Hao, you will also withdraw. Tomorrow is the last day of the Qualifying Competition. When the time comes, there will naturally be an opportunity for all of you to fight with one another!” After seeing Xiao Yan pull back, Hu Gan’s gaze turned toward the blood-robed human figure in the arena and shouted.

Wu Hao knit his brows slightly when he heard Hu Gan shout. His eyes, however, were staring intently at Xiao Yan, who sat in the viewing gallery. The latter also looked back at him without any change in expression. After they exchanged stares for a while, Wu Hao shook his hand and the blood-colored heavy sword was placed into his storage ring. A hoarse voice was slowly emitted, “I hope that you will not disappointment me tomorrow. I don’t wish to see that the person whom Xun Er has waited for such a long

time, to be a useless person.”

Xiao Yan smiled faintly, but did not reply. Once Wu Hao spoke these words, he, too, did not continue to stay. He turned around and walked out of the arena.

Seeing that the Deputy Headmaster had forcefully torn apart an intense fight that was about to break out, the students in the viewing gallery immediately shook their heads in disappointment.

“Alright. The competition will continue.” Hu Gan ordered, after breaking the two of them up with a wave of his hand

As the voice rang out, names were once again begin read from the judges’ seats.

During the next ten plus competitions that followed, Xiao Yan had finally personally witnessed Xun Er in a fight. However, after observing for a while, he helplessly shook his head. It was clear that this girl only displayed a portion of her strength to fight with her opponent. Even if this was the case, she obtained her expected victory after only ten exchanges.

Xiao Yan eyes watched that saucy-looking Xun Er, who had withdrawn from the arena, and rolled his eyes. Seeing this action of hers, Xiao Yan’s intention of analyzing her exact strength during her fight was dashed.

Not long after Xun Er fought, Bai Shan and that red-clothed young lady also came forward to fight once. The two people were indeed worthy of being the ones whom Instructor Ruo Ling had warned him to be careful of. The two people’s opponents were a six star Dou Shi and a seven star Dou Shi respectively. The six star Dou Shi, who had faced Bai Shan, was a little better. After ten plus exchanges with Bai Shan, he chose to take the initiative to admit defeat and ended up leaving the arena unharmed.

The opponent of the red-clothed young lady, on the other hand, was very unlucky. The two people finished performing the initial etiquette and before the judge’s voice could finish saying ‘begin’, the red-clothed young lady had already strangely appeared in front of her opponent. Her gentle, drifting palm contained a powerful force that caused people’s expression to change greatly. With a slap, she violently smacked the seven star Dou

Shi, who had a Dou Qi cloak, out of the arena. After which, the latter continued rolling on the ground for over ten meters before he came to a miserable stop.

On the viewing gallery, shock involuntarily appeared on his face as he watched the red-clothed young lady's sturdy action, which left some people speechless

After Bai Shan and the red-clothed young lady participated, there were not many interesting situations in the remaining competition. Therefore, after Xiao Yan, Xun Er had observed a few rounds, they chose to be the first to exit the noisy stadium. Xiao Yan and Xun Er slowly walked within the academy, enjoying this warm moment of being alone together, something which had been absent for the last two years.

The sky gradually darkened. Xiao Yan and Xun Er once again returned to that elegant home which belonged to Instructor Ruo Ling. When they returned to the house this time around, they met a familiar person, which Xiao Yan had remembered quite deeply back then.

There was a tall, young lady standing prettily in the living room. A pale-purple colored blouse, and a short skirt that placed the legs together undoubtedly exposed the liveliness and energy of the young lady. That face, which held some enchanting and pure characteristics, now appeared even more filled with temptation. Her large, watery eyes appeared as though they could speak.

The face of the young lady contained a smile as she looked over. She appeared to be muddling along quite well in the academy. Of course, with her appearance, there would be a large number of people courting her no matter where she went. However, this young lady, who usually appeared extremely calm in front of the men, anxiously stood up when she saw Xiao Yan enter. She then timidly called out 'Elder Cousin Xiao Yan'.

After Xiao Mei stood in front of him for a while, Xiao Yan eyed that face, which was even prettier than in the past and now filled with temptation. He smiled and nodded but was not overly warm. Back then, when he had become a useless person, the young lady in front of him had chosen to

avoid him, completely hurting his younger self. Therefore, Xiao Yan had a great resistance toward her. Although after two to three years, that kind of resistance had paled significantly, Xiao Yan did not reveal an overly warm expression. He accompanied Xun Er, Xiao Yu, and the others to chat with Xiao Mei in the living room for a while before randomly finding an excuse to stand up and return to his room.

The girls sat on the soft sofa and eyed Xiao Yan's back as he slowly went up to the next floor. Xiao Mei bit her red lips tightly with the back of her teeth. Her eyes were filled with dismay and regret. After some things were done wrongly, there was no longer any chance to reconcile with him. Back then, before Xiao Yan had become a useless person, the relationship between Xiao Mei and Xiao Yan could be unceremoniously said to be comparable to that between Xiao Yan and Xun Er. However... ever since the genius fell from the sky, she chose a route that was in the opposite direction from Xun Er. Xun Er still stayed by his side and never betrayed him, while she was too realistic, cutting an extremely heart-breaking boundary between the two of them...

That boundary still had an eye-piercing crack line even now, regardless of how she tried to make-up for it.

Xun Er could only maintain silence as she eyed Xiao Mei's gloomy expression. She understood Xiao Yan extremely well. This man, who appeared to be gentle, was peerlessly haughty within his heart. Xiao Mei had hurt him back then. Regardless of whether it was on purpose or not, intentionally or unintentionally, she would forever lose the chance to completely mend the relationship between the two of them.

No matter how a person, who had hurt him in the past, treats him in the future, he would have great difficulty accepting them. On this point, Xiao Mei was such a person, and Nalan Yanran was also this way. Back then, when Xiao Mei had chosen to alienate herself from her relationship with Xiao Yan, as well as when Nalan Yanran had come to the Xiao clan to cancel the engagement, Xun Er had said one sentence, "I hope that you will not regret this in the future..."

At this moment, the two women, whom had once hurt Xiao Yan, indeed

regretted their actions. However, it was already too late. This man with a proud heart would no longer go and touch something which had abandoned him, nor would he think that it was worthwhile to do so.

Xun Er suddenly smoothed out her breath as she thought up to this point. She rejoiced a little at her choice back then. Otherwise, no matter how outstanding she was, it was likely that she would never break into that man's heart.

Faint moonlight scattered into the quiet room from the window. Xiao Yan sat cross-legged on the bed. There was a slight fluctuation in the air around him. Threads of energy followed his breathing and entered his body. After which, they were refined into Dou Qi and stored within the Dou Crystal of his vortex.

This training continued for three hours. Only then did Xiao Yan slowly opened his eyes. A wisp of green-colored flame flashed past his dark pupils. It swiftly disappeared.

"There is an increasing amount of Dou Qi in the Dou Crystal. According to this speed, I should be able to reach a six star Da Dou Shi if I am given another ten days." Xiao Yan clenched his fist as he softly muttered.

"Ah, my strength is still far from sufficient..." Xiao Yan frowned and waved his hand. An ancient jade piece appeared in his hand. The jade piece was entirely pale-green in color. There was a spot of light slowly swimming in it. This spot of light represented the life of Xiao Yan's father, Xiao Zhan. If the spot of light was lit, it meant that his life was not in any danger, if the light spot disappeared, that was the moment when Xiao Zhan, including his spirit, had been destroyed.

Xiao Yan held the ancient jade piece. He felt a little absent-minded and sad. When he was young, regardless of whether he was a genius or a useless person, his father had never flashed him any unusual looks. At the time when there were eyes rolling and ridicule all over the clan, his father still maintained his pampering toward him. Each time when the Xiao Yan, who was a little boy, was injured, he would smile, pat the little boy on his shoulders and tell him that a man must be strong. Tears and dispirited

feelings would not let anyone become a strong person.

All of this caused Xiao Yan, who had another matured spirit to accept him, place his father in an extremely important position in his heart.

“Father, I will find you.” Xiao Yan held the jade piece tightly in his head. His eyes had slowly become a lot colder. Regardless of what kind of great beings captured his father were, he would let them pay the price in the future!

As the emotions fluctuated within his heart, a wisp of green-colored flame rose from his palm. The sudden appearance of the green-colored flame caused Xiao Yan to be startled. Immediately, his expression changed drastically. With a thought, the green-colored flame swiftly disappeared. Xiao Yan hurriedly spread out the hand, which he used to hold the jade piece. However, he was stunned to realize that the ancient jade piece, which he originally thought was extremely weak, was actually able to resist the terrifying temperature of the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’.

“This...” Shock flashed across Xiao Yan’s eyes. For the first time, he used a scrutinizing gaze to study this piece of ancient jade, which had always been passed down within the Xiao clan. According to the Elder, this jade piece was something old that only the clan leader had the qualification to hold. Even they did not know much about it.

Xiao Yan’s eyes carefully observed the ancient jade piece. He borrowed the moonlight and suddenly realized that under the shine of the moonlight, this jade piece seemed to have some extremely complicated and mysterious markings. Xiao Yan’s eyes observed it for a very long time until he started to feel dizzy.

Shaking his head, Xiao Yan shook off the feeling from his mind. The astonishment in his heart grew even more intense following his careful observation. This piece of jade did not appear to simply have the effect of storing a thread of the spirit of the clan leader as he had thought. Xiao Yan’s hand moved along the edge of the jade piece and slowly rubbed it. A moment later, his finger abruptly stiffened. When he rubbed up and down along the top edge of the jade piece, he realized that the edge at this point

was different from the other sides. The other sides were naturally formed but this spot appeared to be like a whole piece of jade was forcefully split apart.

“What exactly is this thing? It appears that I can only properly ask the few elders the next time I return to the Xiao clan. The Xiao clan seems to have some things that we, the younger generation, do not know about.” Doubt rose within Xiao Yan’s heart. He stared at this ancient jade piece for a long time, but did not discover anything. He could only shake his head helplessly as he carefully returned the jade piece to his storage ring.

Not long after Xiao Yan stored the jade piece, the dark, black ring on his finger trembled slightly. Immediately, the illusionary figure of Yao Lao slowly drifted out.

“I do not sense the presence of the ‘Heavenly Flame’ in this Jia Nan Academy.” Yao Lao said somewhat helplessly the moment he came out.

“Uh?” The bad news that had suddenly arrived caused Xiao Yan’s expression to change immediately. He frowned and whispered, “Did teacher not say that it was possible to obtain news about the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ here at the Jia Nan Academy?”

“Back then, I had indeed discovered the presence of the ‘Heavenly Flame’ in this region belonging to the Jia Nan Academy. Now, however, I do not have that kind of feeling.” Yao Lao laughed bitterly.

“Don’t tell me that it has ended up in someone else’s hand?” Xiao Yan expression was a little ugly. The ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ was a key factor for his strength to soar.

“I don’t think that is the case. Although I cannot sense the exact presence of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’, the unique attraction between ‘Heavenly Flames’ allows me to use the ‘Bone Chilling Flame’ to vaguely sense that there is still a weak remanent presence of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ within a few thousand kilometer radius of the academy.

“Thousands of kilometers... until when are we going to find it?” Xiao Yan pulled at the corner of his mouth.

“I think that with those old fellows within the Jia Nan Academy, it is not possible that they did not discover the presence of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’. I keep feeling that the Inner Academy has a little relation to this...” Yao Lao spoke slowly.

“Inner Academy?” Xiao Yan was startled.

“Yes, the Inner Academy is the true core of the Jia Nan Academy. If you can infiltrate it, I think we should be able to obtain some information about the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’. Yao Lao was quiet for a while before he suggested.

“Ah, I will try my best...” Xiao Yan sighed. Since he had already arrived at Jia Nan Academy, it was natural that he would not leave empty handed.

“Ah, I will seldom appear in the future. There is a strong person concealing himself around your little girlfriend. It is not convenient for me to appear for too long in order to avoid being discovered...” Once Yao Lao said this, his body swayed and entered the black ring.

Xiao Yan knit his brows slightly together when he saw Yao Lao disappear. He lifted his head and looked at the moon shining outside the window while muttering, “Inner Academy? Does that place really have the ‘Fallen Heart Flame?’”

“I hope that it will not disappoint me.”

Chapter 419: The Last Qualifying Competition

Today was destined to be the most lively day in Jia Nan Academy. This was because the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, which gathered the gazes of all the students, would reach a high tide where everyone would be the most excited.

Hu Jia, Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Xun Er, Xiao Yan. These five people, who clearly displayed their powerful strengths, caused everyone to be shocked during the past two days of the competition. Today, the most eye catching collisions between the strong would unfold among these five outstanding students from the Outer Academy in this competition!

It was due to this that the number of people who gathered at the stadium today was many times more than the past two days. Not all of the surrounding audience were students of the academy. There were many who had come with admiration from Jia Nan City, outside of the academy. As members who lived in Jia Nan City, in all of these years, they clearly knew that this was the most lively day in Jia Nan Academy every year. Therefore, they would naturally not miss this distinguished affair.

When Xiao Yan and the others arrived outside the stadium and eyed the human dragon, which had totally blocked the entrance to the stadium, they could not help but feel a little speechless. Finally, they relied on Instructor Ruo Ling's connections in order to enter the stadium from a tightly guarded side entrance.

After passing through a long, dark tunnel, they finally walked out of the hole at the edge of their vision. The moment they exited, various, incomparably noisy sounds suddenly surfaced next to their ears, causing Xiao Yan's group, which had just been in a somewhat quiet environment, to feel giddy as their eyes became blurry. It was quite a while later before they gradually recovered. They raised their heads and eyed the dense human crowd around the open ground, and could not help but look at each other with bitter smiles.

The group moved along the bottom of the stadium and finally stopped at the Huang class seats they had occupied over the last two days. Only then did they sigh in relief before sitting down.

Xiao Yan, with Xun Er by his side, began to converse with a smile as they sat on the seats. Suddenly, they ceased speaking. Their gaze turned toward a certain special tunnel entrance. At that spot, a group of people, like the stars flattering the moon, clustered around Bai Shan in the middle and were walking towards them. When he saw Xiao Yan's gaze, a cold smile involuntarily surfaced on Bai Shan's handsome face. His mouth moved slightly. Although he did not speak, Xiao Yan could still make out the words that he said.

"I want your reputation to totally disappear today!"

A cold glint flashed across those dark, black eyes. A shallow smile was lifted on Xiao Yan's face as he nodded slightly at Bai Shan. His mouth also moved, "I await you!"

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, you should be careful if you are to fight with Bai Shan. His character really causes people to dislike him but for him to be able to stand out in Jia Nan Academy, a place where talented people are as numerous as the clouds, it means that he definitely has a frightening attainment in terms of his training talent." Xun Er, who had been paying attention to Xiao Yan, naturally discovered the hidden battle between him and Bai Shan. She immediately gave a soft reminder.

"Ah." Xiao Yan nodded slightly and did not refute. He did indeed have some enmity and caution toward Bai Shan but that did not mean that it would not cause him to form any disdain or a belittling mentality toward the latter. What Xun Er said was true. If one did not have some ability, even if you were handsome to the point where you could shake the heavens and move the earth, one would definitely not be able to stand out in this Jia Nan Academy, where strength was honored and from there, become one of the top people in this competition.

Not long after Bai Shan entered the stadium, that red-clothed young lady also slowly walked in. Following her entrance, there were quite a number

of people in the stadium who threw their gazes over. No matter how one put it, Hu Jia could be considered a beauty. Moreover, the thing which really moved people's hearts was her background. Jia Nan Academy's Deputy Headmaster. This position, with monstrous authority, was not any weaker than some of the first rate factions in the continent. Moreover, due to Jia Nan Academy's special position, even some of the strong Dou Zongs would not dare to appear too arrogant in front of Hu Jia's grandfather. After all, even if one did not mention the countless number of strong people who had stepped out of Jia Nan Academy, just the strength of the Jia Nan Academy on the surface was sufficient to frighten those first rate factions until they did not dare do anything funny.

Many people in Jia Nan Academy knew that whoever managed to woo Hu Jia would not only have a warm fragrant soft jade (beautiful woman) in their embrace but would also allow himself to reduce his need to struggle and work hard for at least ten years! There were not many who doubted these words. After all, the Deputy Headmaster of Jia Nan Academy, Hu Jia's grandfather, had this kind of ability!

Although there were many people who were very interested in this kind of enticement, and there were some people who boasted about being a genius had once tried to make contact with Hu Jia, not only did these people not manage to get the beauty, but they ended up returning with wounds all over their bodies. The red-clothed lady used the fiercest attacks to shock all those irritating people courting her until none dared to come and create noise. Therefore, until now, there was no male student who could successfully capture the heart of this Little Witch.

As Xiao Yan eyed the red-clothed young lady, who was slowly walking over to the viewing gallery on the other side, Xiao Yan suddenly recalled Instructor Ruo Ling saying that the lady actually had some feelings toward Xun Er. His face involuntarily became a little strange. A moment later, he shook his head and muttered, "She is indeed worthy of the name 'Little Witch'. Even her tastes are this extraordinary."

Around half an hour after Hu Jia entered the stadium, the number of people in the viewing gallery around the arena had finally been packed to

the point where it seemed about to burst. As one glanced over the dense, black mass of hair, one would not be able to see an end to it. The noisiness agglomerated together and shot directly to the clouds.

“Dong!”

The moment the sun rose high in the azure sky, a clear gong sound finally resounded on the open ground. When they heard the gong, the noisy stadium finally began to become quieter. A countless number of gazes moved toward the gong sound, and eyed the extremely spacious arena.

As all the gazes in the stadium were gathered into the middle of the open ground, the Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan slowly stood up. His gaze looked all around him while his powerful voice hovered through the air of the open ground, like that of a soft thunder, “Yesterday, the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition has chosen the final fifty people. They all have the qualification to enter the Inner Academy to train. However, the Inner Academy has a clear separation of various grades. If one wants better training conditions within the Inner Academy, one must do their best to obtain the best results in this final competition. Each rank that you rise will provide you with a great amount of help. Therefore, do your best in order to obtain an even more excellent training status!”

Hu Gan’s gaze glanced at those students who were quivering with excitement. He smiled and said, “In the past years, we have chosen a competition where students compete in different rounds. This year, however, after a discussion during the Academy Conference, we will enact a slight change in the method used for this final round of competition.”

The students in the stadium were stunned when they heard Hu Gan’s words. They immediately threw their doubtful gazes back toward the arena.

“Now, can the top fifty students all enter the arena.” Hu Jia smiled and spoke brightly.

Xiao Yan and Xun Er were slightly startled when they heard this. All fifty people in an arena?

Although there were many people who did not quite understand Hu Gan's words, human figures repeatedly flashed over from all over the viewing gallery after his words were uttered. They finally appeared in the arena.

As more and more human figures appeared in the arena, the atmosphere in the viewing gallery immediately became more invigorated. Especially with the appearance of Bai Shan, who wearing white clothes and appearing extremely handsome, as well as that hot figure of the red-clothed young lady, Hu Jia. The atmosphere was raised to a higher level. An orderly cheer, that was deafening to the ears, erupted from the crowd.

"Let's go." As he eyed the human figures scattered across the arena, Xiao Yan also laughed softly and stood up with a smile, before speaking to Xun Er who sat beside him.

"Do your best!" Beside them, Instructor Ruo Ling waved her fist and smiled as she encouraged them.

"Yes." Xun Er smiled and nodded. Their two bodies leapt up and their toes pushed off of the guardrail. Two arcs cut through the air, created by their bodies. Under the gazes of a countless number of people, they gently landed in the arena.

Following the entrance of Xiao Yan and Xun Er, the originally heated atmosphere once again suddenly soared.

"Today, we do not want a competition where you compete one round at a time. Instead, it will be a large, chaotic elimination competition, which is filled with passion and enthusiasm. Those able to last the longer in this elimination competition will have an higher ranking and vice versa." Hu Gan smiled as said, while eyeing the numerous competitors, who had successfully entered the competition ground, "Within this arena, no matter what kind of methods you use, even if you join hands with others to form a group, is fine. As long as you all are able to protect yourself in this chaotic battle, you will obtain victory."

Hu Gan's voice had just sounded when private conversations sounded in the stadium. Clearly, the different competition method this year caught

them a little off guard.

“Once the competition begins, those who leave the arena will be considered to have lost. We have people specially recording the numbers. Therefore, as long as you can last a little longer in this chaotic battle, your ranking might be higher by a lot. Hence, endurance is victory.”

“This kind of elimination method is quite interesting.” Xiao Yan’s gaze slowly swept across the competitors present while standing beside Xun Er. His gaze finally mockingly stopped on Bai Shan, who stood not too far away, as he smiled and said, “However, if this is the case, we won’t stand to be in a great advantage. Since we can join hands, girl, let’s first chase away all the other people.”

“Yes.” Xun Er would naturally not reject Xiao Yan’s suggestion as she nodded obediently. Her gaze swept through the arena and suddenly said, “Actually, this kind of competition method also has an extremely great advantage for Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao. All of them possess quite a great reputation in the academy. I have taken a look at the competitors in the arena. There are quite a number of people among them who usually interact with the three of them. Therefore, when the chaotic battle is to start later, they might be able to combine with quite a number of people.”

“Uh? I see that you also have quite a great reputation in the academy. Don’t tell me that you cannot rope in some people?”

Xun Er saucily spoke when she heard this, “If this was in the past, there would really be people who come to be the envoys defending the flower. However, that flower already has an owner. Would other people dare to come?”

Xiao Yan face was dull for a second. He immediately nodded helplessly and said, “Alright, since it is like this, looks like we have to really rely on each other in this final elimination competition... I think, other than the situation where everyone present combines strength and attacks us, I just want to see who has the ability to kick us out of the arena? Bai Shan? Wu Hao? Or that Hu Jia?”

Xun Er tilted her head to eye the skinny looking young man who carried

a huge black ruler on his back. She then saw the confidence that was revealed on the delicate and handsome face before she suddenly smiled. She liked the confidence on his body.

“Regardless of whether we face some monstrous waves in front of us, let us charge through it together.” Xun Er’s small hand suddenly held Xiao Yan’s hand as she softly muttered.

Chapter 420: Big Chaotic Battle

“Do all of you understand the rules of the competition?” When there was no longer anyone entering the arena, Hu Gan’s gaze swept around once and asked in a clear voice.

“Understood!” An orderly reply sounded within the arena when they heard Hu Gan’s words.

“Alright, since all of you understand, I announce that...” Hu Gan slowly raised his hand. Finally, under countless number of gazes, it fell suddenly, “The final round of the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition will now begin!”

“Bang!”

As Hu Gan’s hand fell, the originally quiet arena immediately let out a bang. A rainbow of different colored Dou Qi abruptly erupted in a dazzling fashion. Following a muffled sound being emitted, the human figures in the arena quickly flashed. Most of the people flew swiftly toward the edge of the arena. They were all afraid that there would be someone using an underhanded method to throw them out in this kind of situation, where enemies were everywhere.

Those in the viewing gallery watched the arena where a fight had broken out almost as soon as the competition began. They immediately let out sharp, excited cries which resounded throughout the clouds. Many people tore their throats as they cheered for the competitors whom they liked. This kind of huge grand battle had a stimulation that far exceeded round after round of one on one fights.

“Ke ke, Deputy Headmaster, this is not a bad idea. Although it cannot be considered absolutely fair, this kind of scene where one has to take precautions against sneak attacks all the time will make it extremely easy to cultivate a person’s cautious mindset. Moreover, the people who join hands will also gradually understand the strength of a group. This method is not bad.” As he eyed the chaotic arena, an old man in the central viewing gallery turned around and spoke to Hu Gan beside him.

“I am also sick of watching the one on one battles in the past, therefore, I wanted to change it to something new to try. From the looks of it now, it appears to be quite good. However, some students, who are usually not good at communicating, will not have anyone trustworthy to help guard their backs in this kind of situation where enemies are all around. They are likely going to struggle a little.” Hu Gan smiled as he spoke and threw his gaze back to the chaotic battle.

There would be frequent head-on battles within the arena at this moment. However, it was clear that many people were afraid of an underhanded attack from behind. Therefore, even when fighting with one another, they would merely make contact and pull back, not daring to get tangled up in a fight. Their gaze repeatedly swept cautiously in all directions. Anyone who dared to charge into their territory would cause them to swiftly pull back or attack like a bird startled by a bowstring (panicstricken person).

Although the initial competition was extremely chaotic, some students had become much smarter after seven or eight people were attacked successively and were struck out of the competition while spitting out blood. There were people who saw each other daily and quickly put in good words to draw people together. Those who did not could only pull back and search for similarly solitary people who did not have any companions. Although this kind of improvised groups did not have a good relationship or great trust between each other, this was currently the only method.

Xiao Yan tilted the heavy ruler in his hand to one side while standing with Xun Er on the edge of the arena. A green-colored and yellow-colored Dou Qi wrapped around the two of them. Two extremely powerful Qis seeped out from their bodies. Those competitors who had become a little giddy because of the chaos in the arena, were frightened until they dared not carelessly charge over to this area.

Currently, the two of them did not charge into the totally chaotic battleground. They knew that this kind of extremely chaotic atmosphere would not last too long. As long as Bai Shan and the others gathered their

people, the chaos in the arena would gradually descend into a situation where a few strong groups survived. Then they would respect the other groups and the chaos would be greatly reduced. However, that time would be when the two of them would face a real battle.

Under the numerous cries and shouts from the viewing gallery that shook the sky and ground, competitors were being repeatedly knocked out of the arena from within the competition ground. The moment this happened, the recording officers, who were already around the arena, would swiftly record the competitors who had been knocked out of the arena.

As time slowly flowed by with the shouting that permeated the sky, the chaos in the battleground finally began to show the trend of being reduced. With the examples of those who were miserably struck out as lessons, some scattered individuals also began to learn how to look for companions. In a short while, the chaotic fights in the arena were greatly reduced. There were also more and more of those small groups which were formed by two or more people.

Following the change from individual chaotic battles to a group battle, Xiao Yan and Xun Er finally could no longer remain isolated from the fight. When a small group, consisting of four men, failed in their attempt to surround and attack them and were instead struck out of the arena one after another, Xiao Yan abandoned his 'wait and see' action. His hand held the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly while he took heavy footsteps. Green-colored Dou Qi surged out of his body like a flood, and the powerful suppressive strength of a Da Dou Shi swept horizontally across the entire arena!

However, not long after Xiao Yan unleashed his strength of a Da Dou Shi, five similarly strong strengths also erupted within the chaotic battleground. They were separated into small groups that occupied each of the four corners of the arena.

Xiao Yan's gaze moved to the places where the strengths erupted, causing him to look over. He saw that other than the three of them belonging to Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao, the other two were men that he had never seen before. Behind each of these two men were a cluster of

four or five competitors, whose strength were clearly not weak. With the exception of Bai Shan and the two others, this group was the strongest one.

At this moment, the strengths of most of the groups were clearly displayed. Among them, the strongest three were naturally Bai Shan's, Hu Jia's, and Wu Hao's groups. Between the three of them, Wu Hao's group's strength was the strongest. Other than them, it was the two groups earlier which possessed a Da Dou Shi each. These five groups belonged to the strongest ones in the arena. Other than them, there were some scattered two man groups, or even individuals. Xiao Yan and Xun Er belonged to the so-called two man small groups.

Although their numbers were far from those six man groups, no one dared to underestimate their small group. It was not because of any reason other than that this group was formed by Xiao Yan and Xun Er!

Any one of the two of them could squeeze into the top five in terms of individual strength. Now that the two strong people had teamed up, even strong people like Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Hu Jia, and others viewed them as strong opponents who hindered them.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, where should we fight now?" Xun Er tilted her head and asked with a smile. She glanced at the clearly distinct territories in the arena.

"Let's wait for a moment. There are at least thirty people still in the arena. This includes Bai Sha, Wu Hao, and other strong people. If the two of us don't display our trump cards, I'm afraid that it is really impossible to completely block all of them. Therefore, we can only wait for them to exhaust each other. Perhaps Bai Shan and the other two might want to defeat us but they are also afraid that someone will strike them ruthlessly from behind. Therefore, within a short while, we need not worry about being attacked." Xiao Yan waved the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand, and supported it with his shoulders.

Xun Er smiled slightly and nodded. She moved her delicate hand and an eye-piercing golden light was stretched out from her palm. The strong

energy contained in the golden light was something that even Xiao Yan, by her side, gave a sideward glance at.

It was just as Xiao Yan had said. Although Bai Shan and the two others viewed Xiao Yan's two-man group as their greatest opponent, they did not dare to attack at this moment. The three groups exchanged glances and immediately began to eliminate those scattered, small groups with a tacit agreement. Only after completely eliminating or swallowing these small groups would they be able to begin the final fight.

Following the start of the extermination by these three groups, other than Xiao Yan's and Xun Er's small, two-man group within the arena, the remaining groups crumbled apart not long after coming into contact with these opponents. There were some who were lucky to escape, but most of them were forcefully expelled from the arena.

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and watched those scattered competitors, who had been expelled until they were fleeing in all directions. He mused slightly before wildly taking a step forward in front of the gazes in the entire arena. He cried out with a deep voice, "Those people who don't have a group. If you don't wish to get a lousy ranking, you can come over to this side."

When they heard Xiao Yan's cry, those competitors in the arena who had nowhere to run, immediately wildly rejoiced. As they faced being expelled by three of the strongest groups, even the other two groups who had Da Dou Shi present did not dare to accept them. Now that Xiao Yan had stepped forward, they would naturally be like drowning people grabbing the last straw as they hurriedly ran in the direction that Xiao Yan and Xun Er were in.

This cry from Xiao Yan directly caused the remaining seven competitors in the arena to be embraced under his arm. In an instant, the small group, which only had two people, immediately soared to having a number of people which could contend with those groups of Bai Shan and the others. Of course, this was only in terms of numbers. Those people in the groups of Bai Shan and the two others clearly had a strength that surpassed the people in Xiao Yan's hands, who had been forced to flee in all directions.

However, Xiao Yan did not have the wishful thinking that he could defeat Bai Shan and the others by relying on these competitors. He only needed these people to exhaust some of the people his opponents had.

Although this action of Xiao Yan had managed to buy people's hearts, it caused the three strongest groups belonging to Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao to be a little dissatisfied. The last two were a little better but Bai Shan was one who really did not want his actions to benefit others. Moreover, this other person was Xiao Yan, whom he disliked the most. Therefore, his expression gradually became gloomy. He waved his hand and eight competitors, who were quite strong, followed him as they slowly walked in the direction where Xiao Yan's group was standing. From the looks of it, they were actually directly declaring war on Xiao Yan's group.

“Chi.”

Seeing Bai Shan's group, whose faces were dark and solemn, come over, Xiao Yan raised his eyebrows. The heavy ruler in his hand carried the sound of pressuring wind as it rolled off his shoulders. He coldly smiled and asked, “What? You cannot endure any longer?”

Xun Er, who was beside Xiao Yan, also glanced over at Bai Shan and the others. The golden-colored Dou Qi that shrouded the surface of her body became increasingly dense, awaiting the huge battle.

“Four of you, go and expel the scattered individuals behind Xiao Yan. Another four will go and temporarily hold off Junior Xun Er. Leave Xiao Yan to me.” Bai Shan's hand shook slightly and a long, silver-white lance flashed and appeared. A faint glow flowed on the body of the lance. One look at it and one would know that it was a weapon with a Monster Core inserted. As he held this long lance, he began to issue instructions blandly.

Upon hearing Bai Shan's order, the eight people behind him immediately began spreading out, dividing the work.

“Xun Er, prepare to fight.” Xiao Yan tilted his head, smiled, and spoke upon seeing that Bai Shan's group had spread out like a fan as they headed over.

“Yes.” Xun Er nodded slightly. She was truly mesmerizing as the golden

glow shrouded her body.

The moment Bai Shan's group began the attack, Wu Hao and Hu Jia also began to expel the other two remaining groups.

The most exciting and heart-stirring head-on fight in this chaotic battle had finally arrived!

At this moment, the sharp shouting and cheering from the surrounding viewing gallery sounded like a thunderclap.

Chapter 421: Shaking Lightning Arc Blast

Xiao Yan slowly exhaled a breath of air as he eyed Bai Shan's group, whose footsteps were becoming increasingly fast. Within the interior of the vortex of his body, the rhombic Dou Crystal trembled slightly. Threads of surging, green-colored Dou Qi flowed out and circulated, moving along the Qi Paths, like flood water as it roared and galloped. Finally, it surged out of his body and suddenly raised Xiao Yan's strength to its peak.

The enormous Heavy Xuan Ruler was covered by the green-colored Dou Qi. This powerful Dou Qi caused the surrounding air around the heavy ruler to have some slight undulations appear. Xiao Yan raised his head while holding the hilt of the ruler tightly in his hand. He tilted his head toward Xun Er and said faintly, "Finish them off quickly. Don't delay too long."

"Three minutes." Xun Er nodded slightly. Golden-colored Dou Qi surged out from her body. An eye-piercing golden glow caused her to be as radiant as the sun, appearing extremely conspicuous.

Xiao Yan nodded his head as he sensed the fierce Dou Qi erupting explosively from behind him. He lifted his foot slightly and immediately stomped it on the ground. The sound of energy exploding appeared from the bottom of his foot as he immediately turned into a black-colored blur that carried an intense wind pressure. He shot fiercely toward Bai Shan, who wore an icy cold face.

"Hmph! Don't think that you can run amuck just because you defeated Lu Mu. There are many within Jia Nan Academy who are stronger than him." The intense pressure of the wild wind blew against Bai Shan's white clothes until they were pasted tightly to his skin. His expression, however, held no fear. With a cold laugh, his long, silver-colored lance abruptly shook and the flashing silver lightning Dou Qi covered the entire lance, like numerous, small snakes. He held the handle of the lance and with a stern cry, the long lance turned into a silver-colored light that shot toward Xiao Yan's neck in an extremely ruthless manner.

“Clang!” A large black shadow suddenly fell vertically and the silver-colored glow directly pressing against the enormous ruler’s body. The force contained in the attack merely caused the hand, that Xiao Yan used to hold the heavy ruler, to tremble slightly.

Although the vicious attack was blocked, Bai Shan’s expression did not change even a little. His hand suddenly shook, and carried a lightning-like, silver-colored Dou Qi which moved along the long silver-colored lance and erupted explosively. Finally, it turned into a few opaque silver-colored lance shapes that strangely moved around the heavy ruler and pierced toward Xiao Yan’s head from behind.

The silver-colored Dou Qi carried a lightning glow and emitted ‘chi chi’ sounds as it passed through the air. Xiao Yan already had a sense of the attacking strength of the lightning affinity Dou Qi when he sparred with his second brother, Xiao Li, long ago. Therefore, he would naturally not underestimate it within his heart. The few silver-colored lance shapes that came roaring at him like angry dragons were swiftly becoming magnified in Xiao Yan’s dark black eyes. Xiao Yan’s body quivered. A powerful, green-colored Dou Qi surged out fiercely. In an instant, it agglomerated into a green-colored, substance-like energy helmet that tightly wrapped around his entire head, including his face. The silver-colored lance shapes violently exploded around his helmet, but one could merely see that the silver-colored glow only left a countless number of tiny marks on the surface of the helmet.

The lightning lances disappeared and Xiao Yan abruptly took a step forward. The helmet on his face had almost instantly disappeared. He swung the heavy ruler in his hand horizontally and an enormous force, which carried the sharp sound of air being cut violently, smashed toward Bai Shan’s head.

The terrifying force created by the swinging of the heavy ruler caused the corner of Bai Shan’s eyes to twitch involuntarily. Only after personally fighting at close range with Xiao Yan did he know just how frightening the latter’s strength was.

A silver-colored glow suddenly flooded out from his feet as Bai Shan

swayed his body. With a 'chi' sound, silver light flashed and his body actually pulled back nearly five to six meters. His speed was so fast that it left people somewhat speechless.

"Your strength may be great but don't tell me that you didn't know that the lightning affinity Dou Qi not only has a strong attacking strength but is also very good at increasing one's agility?" Bai Shan coldly laughed after borrowing the Agility Dou Technique of an unknown name to avoid Xiao Yan's attack.

"It is indeed very fast."

Xiao Yan randomly waved his heavy ruler. He faintly nodded, and the corner of his eyes glanced at Xun Er and the other few competitors, who had come to seek refuge. They had already begun coming into contact with each other. At Xun Er's side, the four strong people, who belonged to the peak of the Dou Shi class, were suppressed until they could only parry her attacks. From the looks of it, it appeared that she would be able to completely expel the four of them from the competition within three minutes. On the other side, the situation was also completely one-sided. Although Xiao Yan's group's numbers were larger, the seven people, who were attacked until they did not have any strength earlier, were still defeated after ten exchanges despite only facing four people now. In just one minute, nearly three of the seven people, who had come to seek refuge, were finished off by their opponent's attack.

"They are indeed a group of slush that cannot support a wall (useless people). If they don't have their courage, how would they fight with people?" Xiao Yan frowned slightly and shook his head. He withdrew his gaze. As long as he held off Bai Shan, Xun Er would have sufficient time to completely eliminate all of the opponents. At that time, once Xun Er was able to lend a helping hand, this Bai Shan would only be left with the single fate of being defeated.

"I will first defeat you. After that, even if Junior Xun Er is able to struggle free of the others, I can be considered to have withdrawn after successfully completing my mission. It is fine if I am defeated by her. Before this, however, I want to let you, Xiao Yan, become a defeated opponent of mine

in front of all the students in the academy!” Bai Shan appeared to be clear of Xiao Yan’s intention. He coldly smiled, and pointed his sharp, long lance at Xiao Yan from a distance as he spoke indifferently.

“On what basis?” Xiao Yan inserted the heavy ruler, in his hand, into the ground and smiled as he replied.

“By relying on my five star Da Dou Shi’s strength and this...” A dark coldness was lifted from the corner of Bai Shan’s mouth. His hands were suddenly placed over the middle section of the lance. He immediately rotated it wildly. As the long, silver-colored lance rotated crazily, an intense silver glow suddenly appeared on Bai Shan’s body. Threads of silver-colored lightning, which were like small snakes, began to repeatedly discharge and shrink. From a distance, it appeared that Bai Shan was currently like a silver-colored ball of light. Moreover, the surface of the ball of light was covered with countless numbers of silver-colored tentacles.

The intense, wild wind blew until Xiao Yan’s eyes narrowed. He sensed the powerful energy that was agglomerating in the long lance within Bai Shan’s hands. That was a kind of energy which contained an extremely wild element, much like a thunderbolt.

“He directly used such a powerful Dou Technique from the start. Does he plan to finish me off quickly...” Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and slightly knit his brows together as he watched the swiftly soaring energy in the long lance within Bai Shan’s hand. He moved his palm slightly and a pale green flame began surfacing in a partially visible manner under the cover of the green-colored Dou Qi.

“Xiao Yan, let me show you just what a true genius is! You are not good enough for Xun Er!” There was the vague sound of soft, dark, cold laughter from Bai Shan being transmitted from within the whirring sound of the wind. Quickly following this, the sound of wind that permeated the sky suddenly paused. Xiao Yan glanced over, only to realize that the long silver-colored lance in Bai Shan’s hand, which was rotating like a wind wheel, suddenly paused in his hands without moving anymore. The current long lance appeared to have completely turned into a silver-

colored lightning lance. Lightning flashed from the body of the lance and there was the sound of thunderclaps being emitted. When the long lance moved slightly, it emitted a powerful energy that would cause the space around it to ripple unceasingly.

“Go and die!”

A dense darkness flashed across Bai Shan’s eyes. He held the long lance tightly as his legs slid. The long lance was slowly lifted above his head and, an instant later, released the sound of a thunderclap as it suddenly smashed into the hard ground. In an instant, a ground shaking explosion pulled all the gazes from the entire stadium over. When they saw Bai Shan, who was like a silver-colored sun, as well as the frightening strength contained in his long lance, roaring repeatedly resonated from the viewing gallery, one after another.

“Shaking Lightning Arc Blast!”

The ice cold cry suddenly rang out from the silver-colored circle of light. Under a countless number of shocked gazes, a silver-colored lightning arc, that was at least ten feet long, was immediately channeled out explosively from the area where the long lance made contact with the ground. Anywhere that the lightning arc passed, the hardened surface of the arena was damaged until it was a complete mess.

The lightning arc was like a meandering silver snake. Its speed was so fast that it caused people to be unable to react in time. Outside the arena, everyone could merely see the silver light flashing within the arena, immediately, they saw a deep gully which was formed while emitting a crackling sound. The appearance was like a field which was plowed by a bull. After this, everyone heard a deafening explosion. Their gazes hurriedly followed the sound to take a look, only to see that the spot where the explosion occurred was actually in the direction where Xiao Yan was standing.

As they eyed the large gully, which appeared where the silver-colored lightning arc passed through the ground, numerous people swallowed a mouthful of saliva. Even a seven or eight star Dou Shi would likely be

seriously injured on the spot if they were to receive this kind of terrifying attack.

Dust slowly rose and pervaded the spot where the explosion occurred. There was not the slightest sound within the dust. It was as though the person within it had turned into dust under this terrifying attack by Bai Shan.

A paleness surfaced on Bai Shan's face as his long lance made contact with the ground. A few drops of cold sweat also rolled down from his forehead. He immediately inhaled a deep breath of air and raised his head to observe the dust, where no movement could be seen. The corner of his mouth was pulled into a dense look. This 'Shaking Lightning Arc Blast' was a High Xuan Dou Technique. It was one of the high class Dou Techniques which he had mastered. Back then, when he was training in the 'Black-Corner Region', he had once used this attack to seriously wound a strong Dou Ling, who could not raise his defences in time, before finally taking the person's head. He believed that even though Xiao Yan's strength was comparable to his, the former would definitely not be able to survive this attack.

The dust in the arena gradually scattered while the arena was completely silent. Countless numbers of gazes were focused intently at this spot. They really wanted to know if that Xiao Yan, who had swiftly and suddenly risen within Jia Nan Academy like a falling star, would be really able to contend against an outstanding and prominent person like Bai Shan.

The dust slowly became thinner. A huge, black ruler, that was inserted into the hard ground, was first to appear in front of everyone's sight.

A wild wind suddenly blew, and the dust completely disappeared. A human figure that was completely wrapped in a green-colored flame appeared in front of a countless number of gazes.

Bai Shan's dark gaze suddenly solidified. His expression changed slightly as he eyed the human figure with a green-colored flame writhing over his entire body. Even though they were this far apart, Bai Shan could still feel a terrifying heat from that strange flame.

“Have you attacked until you are satisfied?” The green-colored flaming figure lifted his head slightly. A faint voice was emitted. The flame on his face was slightly thinner as it revealed an indifferent delicate and handsome face. It was shockingly Xiao Yan!

Bai Shan’s face trembled slightly. He held the long, silver-colored lance in his hand. Only now did he faintly sense just exactly how strong Xiao Yan was.

“If you are satisfied, then it is my turn.” Bai Shan did not speak, but the green-colored flame human figure muttered to himself.

Bai Shan’s eyes watched every single move Xiao Yan made. After hearing the latter say these words, he suddenly pulled back. However, he had just taken a few steps back when he sensed a heat that was transmitted from behind him. He hurriedly turned around and a pale green figure coincidentally flashed past the corner of his eyes. A fist that was wrapped by a flame was immediately and suddenly becoming larger in his eyes!

Chapter 422: Fight

The fist carried a hot, green-colored flame. Although it had yet to come in contact with his body, Bai Shan could still sense a burning pain, which he could not endure, erupt from his skin. He clenched his teeth to withstand the pain. Silver light once again surged and appeared on his feet. With a sway of his body, it strangely flashed and withdrew a couple of meters.

However, just as Bai Shan withdrew out of Xiao Yan's attacking range, the green figure in front of him flashed again before he had the time to lift his lance to attack. Xiao Yan's indifferent face once again appeared in front of Bai Shan. Both of Xiao Yan's fists appeared to be crazy as they created more than ten afterimages and ruthlessly smashed toward various parts of Bai Shan's body. Each and every punch landed on flesh. For a period of time, the muffled sound of fist contacting flesh repeatedly sounded within the arena.

"Bastard!"

The waves of pain that were transmitted from all over his body caused the anger within Bai Shan's heart to surge. Xiao Yan's attacks were all unleashed at close range. This kind of distance did not allow him to display his lance skills. Although using the 'Wind Lightning Movement' Agility Dou Technique could allow him to pull some distance away, Xiao Yan, who had removed the restraint of the Heavy Xuan Ruler, was coincidentally able to use his great increase in speed to catch up with Bai Shan. Therefore, it was completely futile no matter how Bai Shan used the 'Wind Lightning Movement' to increase the distance between him and Xiao Yan.

If he pulled back by two meters, Xiao Yan would follow and advance by two meters. No matter what happened, Xiao Yan always engaged in close combat with Bai Shan, not giving Bai Shan any opportunity to display his lance techniques. Bai Shan, who had lost the help of his strongest weapon, was undoubtedly a great tragedy when engaging in hand to hand combat with Xiao Yan.

The Xiao Yan holding the Heavy Xuan Ruler was not terrifying. What was frightening was the Xiao Yan who had escaped the restraint of the weight of the Heavy Xuan Ruler as well as the strange effect of suppressed Dou Qi in his body.

Perhaps Bai Shan could still use his lightning affinity Dou Qi and his outstanding lance techniques to fight with the Xiao Yan when he was holding the Heavy Xuan Ruler. However, in hand to hand combat, Bai Shan's best option was to create a gap between the two of them as soon as possible. However, he was completely suppressed by Xiao Yan on this point. Therefore, a moment of carelessness would cause him to fall into a situation where he could not turn things around.

Xiao Yan had basically turned into a vague black shadow that repeatedly shuttled around Bai Shan. His fists carried waves of ferocious wind as they violently struck Bai Shan's body, which was completely covered with silver-colored Dou Qi. At this moment, the fist, palm, arm, elbow, leg, knee... any part of Xiao Yan's body could turn into an attack weapon. As he waved his fists, there were afterimages that repeatedly appeared.

Faced with Xiao Yan's nearly insane melee attacks, the long lance in Bai Shan's hand was snatched away. Although he occasionally used his fist to exchange one or two blows with Xiao Yan, was the 'Green Lotus Core Flame,' wrapped around Xiao Yan's body, an ordinary thing? Each time they exchanged blows, a red swell would appear on Bai Shan's fist. If he did not have the protection of Dou Qi, it was likely that his skin would be incinerated into pig trotters by the high temperature of the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' the moment it came into contact with him.

In the arena, Bai Shan, who had been acting pompous earlier, had suddenly turned into a conspicuous punching bag that could only take a beating. This extremely drastic change caused a countless number of people in the viewing gallery to be totally stunned. Was that Bai Shan being chased and beaten by Xiao Yan, having no means of fighting back, really that powerful and influential genius within the academy?

"Crazy fellow..." Instructor Ruo Ling's and Xiao Yu's faces were similarly completely stunned as they eyed Xiao Yan, who was performing his

outburst. They did not expect that this fellow, who appeared to be gentle, would actually be this frightening when he was fighting seriously...

“That flame on Xiao Yan’s body should be... a ‘Heavenly Flame’, right?” The old man in the middle seats of the stadium, who was addressed as Old Huo by Hu Gan, eyed the green-colored flame burning on Xiao Yan’s body. His usually calm expression had finally changed a lot as he slowly spoke.

“Yes, that should be true. A temperature that would cause even us to feel some fear. It is indeed a ‘Heavenly Flame.’ It’s just that I don’t know what kind of flame it is. If Xiao Yan were to display this ‘Heavenly Flame’ when his strength has increased a little more, even a strong Dou Wang may not dare to easily receive it.” Hu Gan nodded and said.

“This Xiao Yan, my Alchemist Department wants him...” Old Huo mused for a moment before he immediately spoke in a soft tone.

“Uh? He is someone going into the Inner Academy, Old Huo.” Hu Gan was startled as he spoke after hearing this.

“Entering the Inner Academy and entering the Alchemist Department does not conflict with one another. Xiao Yan is also an alchemist. It would only benefit him if he comes to the Alchemist Department. Moreover, this would also not hinder his training in the inner academy.” Old Huo replied faintly.

“In that case, do as you please. I have no objections as long as you are able to get him to enter the Alchemist Department. After all, it is more than what I can wish for to be able to add another outstanding alchemist to the academy.” Hu Gan shook his head as he spoke with a smile.

Old Huo nodded slightly, but no longer spoke. He continued to throw his gaze into the arena. Those indifferent, old eyes of his stared intently at the green-colored flame rising on Xiao Yan’s body. An extremely rare emotion of envy flashed across his eyes a long while later.

Another punch violently smashed into Bai Shan’s chest. Immediately, a soft ‘Ka Cha’ sound suddenly sounded. Xiao Yan smiled coldly as he eyed the slowly shattering Dou Qi Armor on Bai Shan’s body. Another kick shot out, landing heavily on Bai Shan’s stomach. A loud sound could be heard,

and the lightning Dou Qi Armor on the surface of Bai Shan's body was actually forcefully broken by Xiao Yan.

The force of this kick from Xiao Yan was extremely great. Therefore, Bai Shan bounced against the ground of the arena for dozens of meters before he came to a slow stop. He could not resist spitting out a mouthful of fresh blood. With a pale expression, he grit his teeth and stood up with a quivering body. After viciously looking at Xiao Yan in the distance, he took out a black-colored medicinal pill from within his storage ring, stuffed it into his mouth and swallowed it.

At this moment, Xiao Yan was not in a hurry to bother about Bai Shan's action. This was because he had discovered that seemingly graceful, naturally flowing Dou Qi in his body had actually began to become extremely turbulent during that wild hand to hand combat. Waves of Dou Qi flowed wildly within his Qi Paths. The air around Xiao Yan also began to fluctuate swiftly. Threads of pure energy were forming with a gushing and pouring tendency as they surged into Xiao Yan's body. From the looks of it, it was clearly the activity that only occurred just before one was about to advance in strength!

Xiao Yan actually luckily achieved the opportunity to break through during the continuous and thoroughly unconcerned display of his physical attacks earlier. This resulted in the automatic flow of Dou Qi into his body. His strength was also beginning to rise naturally as though everything had fallen into place!

However, the place to raise his strength appeared to be quite bad....

The activity that Xiao Yan had created could naturally not escape some of the people with good eyesight. Therefore, shocked shouting of "Xiao Yan is actually advancing his strength in combat?" quickly followed. This sounded one after another from the viewing gallery. A countless number of people were stunned as they watched the human figure, who was wrapped in the green-colored flame. Why was it that this fellow always did things that caused people to be stunned? The fight in the arena was now of a crucial moment. Yet, he actually suddenly gained the chance to advance his strength at this moment. This really caused people to be

unable to laugh or cry at his luck.

It should be known that when one was increasing their strength, one cannot receive too much interference. Otherwise, if it were mild interference, one would be injured, if it were serious interference, one's life could be in danger. If it was during a normal time, many people would envy him greatly when such an event occurred. However, who would think that this situation was a place to raise one's strength?

"No way?" At this moment, Xiao Yan could not resist letting out a curse at this sudden situation that had occurred. He also understood that it was basically impossible for him to quietly raise his strength in this situation. In addition, Xiao Yan had not the slightest intention to push forward his advancement this time around. It had automatically found him and did not allow Xiao Yan to reject it. This was the point where Xiao Yan felt unable to laugh or cry. In the past, this kind of condition did not come despite him begging over a hundred times. Now that he did not want it to arrive, it actually caught up with him.

"Ha ha, Xiao Yan, looks like even the heavens are helping me!" A nearly abnormal flush suddenly surged onto Bai Shan's pale face after he consumed that pale black medicinal pill. His originally weak Qi had also abruptly soared by quite a lot. When he saw Xiao Yan standing in the same spot, unable to move and the activity around him, he came to a sudden understanding. He could not help but laugh wildly. His palm sucked at the long, silver-colored lance, which had fallen some distance away and the long lance turned into a dark shadow which shot into Bai Shan's hand.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, you can complete your advancement. I will help you temporarily hold them back!" A pale golden figure suddenly flashed in front of Xiao Yan as Xun Er smiled and said. At this moment, the eight competitors under Bai Shan had already been totally expelled out of the arena by her.

"Give me ten minutes." Xiao Yan hesitated for a moment before clenching his teeth and nodding. He immediately and hurriedly sat cross-legged on the ground, sunk his mind into his body and controlled the

energy that was wildly entering his body.

Xun Er eyed Xiao Yan as he closed his eyes and controlled the disordered interior of his body. She then turned her cold gaze toward Bai Shan. A golden glow flashed on her delicate hand as she faintly said, "If you want to come over, just attack. However, I will no longer hold anything back."

Hearing these extreme words of Xun Er, a ferocity suddenly surged onto Bai Shan's face. He inhaled a deep breath of air and suppressed the fury in his heart. Suddenly he turned his gaze toward the other side of the arena. At that spot, the groups led up Wu Hao and Hu Jia, had coincidentally , expelled the two groups who had Da Dou Shis, allowing the to take charge of the arena. At this moment, Wu Hao and Hu Jia had also clearly sensed the strange movement around Xiao Yan. Their faces were immediately astonished. Clearly, even they did not expect that Xiao Yan would meet an opportunity to raise his strength during such a situation.

"Wu Hao, Hu Jia, I think that we can perhaps join hands to first get rid of Xiao Yan and Xun Er. You should also know the strength of the two of them. Moreover, Xiao Yan is now in a breakthrough stage. If he is to successfully breakthrough, his strength would greatly rise to another level. At that time, can the two of you, who fight by yourselves, stop the two of them? If this continues, we would sooner or later be defeated!" Bai Shan's soft voice suddenly sounded by their ears just as Wu Hao and Hu Jia were feeling surprised at the strange action of Xiao Yan.

The two of them were startled when they heard Bai Shan's words and immediately knit their brows tightly together.

"Hei, don't the both of you covet Junior Xun Er? If we can get Xiao Yan out of the competition, then he would lose the qualification of entering the top five. With your status, you should know that the top five has a special examination. At that time, we will be together with Junior Xun Er. Without Xiao Yan, that annoying brat, we will only need to see who can move Junior Xun Er's heart." Bai Shan's voice continued to hover over the ears of the both of them, "Hu Jia, you cannot find a second girl who has a greater temperament than Junior Xun Er in the entire Jia Nan Academy. Do you want to see her ruined by Xiao Yan? And Wu Hao, in so many

years, Junior Xun Er is the only person who has moved your heart. If Xiao Yan continues to be by Xun Er side, when would you get an opportunity? Therefore, he is our common enemy! Don't hesitate any longer. If Xiao Yan is allowed to successfully advance his strength, the ones who fail will be us!"

Bai Shan's words caused Wu Hao's and Hu Jia's expressions to change slightly. These words has coincidentally stomped on their weakness. A long while later, they exchanged glances and nodded. In deep voices, they replied, "Alright, let's first get rid of Xiao Yan from the competition."

Chapter 423: Xun Er's Strength

As the three of them reached an agreement, Wu Hao and Hu Jia waved their hands. Both of them brought each of their four remaining competitors as they slowly walked in the direction which Xiao Yan and Xun Er were at.

A dark coldness swept through Bai Shan's eyes when he saw the actions of the two of them. He turned around and viciously stared at Xiao Yan, who had his eyes closed. After which, his gaze once again stopped at the young lady, who was standing prettily in front of Xiao Yan, some intoxication surface on his face. He clenched his fist tightly and softly muttered, "You are mine!"

Bai Shan grasped the handle of his lance and strode toward where Xiao Yan and Xun Er were at.

The movement of everyone in the arena did not escape Xun Er's notice. When she saw the three groups actually choosing to come over at the same time, she appeared to have understood something. For the first time, a faint coldness appeared on her elegant and exquisite face. She waved her sleeves gently and golden-colored Dou Qi swiftly surged forth. A force that was not weaker than a seven star Da Dou Shi erupted explosively from Xun Er's body without being held back. The golden-colored Dou Qi agglomerated into two clusters of golden light in her palms, much like small suns, appearing attractive to people's eyes.

"What? Do you want to combine forces and attack together?" Xun Er watched the eleven people, who were coming closer as she asked faintly.

"Hee hee, Xun Er, relax, we will not hurt you. It is just that I must get rid of that fellow." Hu Jia pointed at the closed eyed Xiao Yan as she spoke with a smile.

"You can come and try." Xun Er replied in an ice cold manner. At the same time, the two clusters of intense golden light in her palms became more and more eye-piercing. Bai Shan, Hu Jia, Wu Hao and another eight competitors, who were at the peak of the Dou Shi class, this line-up was

sufficient to cause her to feel extremely troubled to deal with. Moreover, she still needed to pay attention to Xiao Yan in order to protect him.

“Ah, Xun Er, don’t you understand my feelings toward you? What is so good about these stinky men?” Hu Jia’s watery pupils, which contained a cunningness, stared at Xun Er in a pitiful manner. Her warm voice caused the expression of Bai Shan by her side to appear a little unnatural. Was it not better to allow him to be the one who said these words?

Xun Er shook her head and ignored Hu Jia. She took a step back and placed Xiao Yan behind her, using her actions to announce her intent to Hu Jia and the others.

“Junior Xun Er, it is just as Hu Jia has said. We will not harm you. We only want you to not interfere with us.” Bai Shan smiled as he spoke to Xun Er.

Xun Er coldly looked at him. This time around, she was too lazy to even talk to him. She did not feel how abominable this fellow was in the past. During these short few days, however, Xun Er’s hatred for Bai Shan had reached the extreme.

The ice cold gaze of Xun Er once again caused Bai Shan to tremble slightly. He inhaled a deep breath of air and tried his best to force a smiling face. He then spoke to Hu Jia and Wu Hao, “Let’s act. We cannot delay any longer. Otherwise, Xiao Yan will successfully advance.”

Hu Jia and Wu Hao nodded their heads when they heard Bai Shan’s urging. Dou Qi slowly surged out of their bodies, and in an instant, the arena was divided and occupied by a few strong forces.

The change that occurred in the arena similarly caused a wave to rise in the viewing gallery. From the looks of the actions of Bai Shan and the others it was clear that they wanted to fight three against one. This kind of method, where a larger group bullied the smaller one, caused waves of uproars to sound from the viewing gallery. However, when these people recalled that this competition method did not lean toward absolute fairness, they could only helplessly shrink back.

“Aren’t these fellows too despicable? To actually fight three against

one?” Xiao Yu’s face could not help but flush as she cried out angrily when she saw the situation in the arena, which had reached the point where Xun Er was surrounded.

“Ah, the rules of this competition this time around did not disallow using such a method. Therefore, we can’t do anything about it.” Instructor Ruo Ling sighed gently. The phalanx of her finger under her sleeves had turned slightly white because she had clenched her fist too tightly, “Hopefully, Xun Er can hold out for ten minutes. As long as Xiao Yan completes his advancement, everything will be fine.”

“Hu Gan, looks like this attempt of yours has too many loopholes. Even something like three against one can actually appear.” Old Huo frowned slightly as he faintly spoke, while looking into the arena. There was some ridicule within his voice.

At this moment, Hu Gan’s expression was a little ugly. He could only laugh bitterly when he heard these words of Old Huo before sighing, “This kind of competition is indeed very chaotic. I have already said at the beginning of the competition that they are not breaking the rules by doing this. You should not think that I have chosen to turn a blind eye to this because Hu Jia is participating. That was her own decision and I will not interfere even a little. Similarly, if she fails or some other thing happens, I will also not interfere. All of these are issues that belong to them, the young people. I will definitely not interfere.”

“Hopefully.” Old Huo nodded and spoke faintly as he once again threw his gaze into the arena.

Under a countless number of gazes, the encirclement in the arena finally locked onto Xun Er. Eight participants, who were at the peak of the Dou Shi class, were the first to attack. The eight figures directly carried a fierce force as they shot toward Xiao Yan behind Xun Er.

“Guardian Trigram Palm!”

Xun Er’s pretty face became cold. The golden glow within her body surged and her legs actually left the ground by a distance of half an inch. Her long hair, which extended down her back to her waist, moved

automatically without wind. The golden glow in her palm surged and eight palms struck out in succession. One could see the afterimages of the eight palms pausing in midair before they immediately left a golden-colored energy trail as they shot out in a lightning-like manner. Finally, they heavily imprinted themselves into the chests of the eight competitors, who could not dodge in time. In an instant, the eight of them vomited a mouthful of fresh blood and were directly knocked out of the competition arena by this one strike of Xun Er's, under a countless number of stunned gazes.

“So strong...” One move and she settled eight people at the peak of the Dou Shi class. Numerous people in the viewing gallery inhaled a deep breath of cool air. Within Jia Nan Academy, Xun Er had seldom used her true strength. Currently, because of Xiao Yan's matter, the actions of Bai Shan and the others had clearly enraged her, touching her bottom line. Finally, she ceased holding back. Therefore, she used such a powerful strike when she attacked!

The golden glow in front of them had just disappeared when a bloody aura suddenly pounced over. A blood-colored human figure flashed in a bizarre manner as it advanced. As Wu Hao waved his hand, he carried a blood-colored fog and attacked Xun Er.

“Bang, bang, bang!”

Xun Er's expression did not fluctuate in the slightest when faced with Wu Hao's frontal attack. Her hands, which were shrouded by a golden light, chose to meet the attack head on and collided with Wu Hao. Each time their hands struck against each other, an ear-piercing energy explosion would appear.

Only after they exchanged nearly ten blows did Xun Er's lovely figure sway slightly and took half a step back. On the other hand, Wu Hao took a full three steps back.

Wu Hao had just stepped back, when the figure of a whip, carrying a thundering noise, fell from the sky. Xun Er turned her hand and raised it. A golden glow shot out explosively and knocked away the long whip

which Hu Jia had lashed over. At the same time, Xun Er's toes suddenly pulled her body back as she gave a violent kick behind, pushing back Bai Shan, who had wanted to make a detour to launch a sneak attack on Xiao Yan from behind.

Within less than two minutes, Xun Er used her own strength to defeat eight people at the peak of the Dou Shi class and forced back Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao, whose strength were not far from hers. Although this was because the three of them did not really use their trump cards, her skill was still really shocking.

After the first exchange, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao also had a rough outline of Xun Er's strength. Some seriousness immediately surfaced on their faces. They exchanged glances with one another and the Dou Qi within the three of them began to surge simultaneously. Immediately, the three figures launched their fiercest attacks toward Xun Er at the same time.

One could only see human figures flashing as they heard the loud noises erupting from the collision of Dou Qi and watched energy ripples form within the arena. Bai Shan and the two others used all their tactics with the intention of attacking Xiao Yan, while Xun Er was like an enormous mountain that blocked the three of them. Any attack that was shot toward Xiao Yan would be accurately blocked by her. That intuition, which was nearly abnormal, gave Bai Shan and the two others an extremely great headache.

“Bang!”

Xun Er's two hands once again collided with Bai Shan's and Hu Jia's attack. The three of them took a few short steps back. Xun Er had just pulled back to defend Xiao Yan when she suddenly sensed a bloody aura flowing from her right. When she turned around to take a look, she realized that Wu Hao had actually taken advantage of the time when she was fighting with Bai Shan and Hu Jia to approach Xiao Yan without her knowing.

A fury flashed across Xun Er's face as she watched Wu Hao approaching

Xiao Yan. Her toes pressed gently against the ground and her body instantly appeared in front of Wu Hao. The golden glow on her right palm surged and it immediately carried a powerful force to slam ferociously at Wu Hao's chest.

This attack of Xun Er was something that even Wu Hao did not dare to slight. He immediately and hurriedly met the blow with a palm which was shrouded by a bloody aura.

"Bang!" The two palms smashed together and the rock surface under Wu Hao's feet was shattered into powder.

"Chi!" Xun Er had just exchanged blows with Wu Hao, when rushing wind appeared behind her. Her eyebrows were slightly knit together. Her right hand carried a ferocious golden glow as she thrust it over.

"Bang!" The glowing golden palm, which she had just shot over, was blocked by Hu Jia. In the arena, Xun Er actually relied on just herself to handle two strong opponents without showing any signs of being defeated. This kind of strength could be called terrifying.

"Hei, Junior Xun Er, I'm sorry. This fellow must be kicked out of the arena today." Just as Xun Er was tied up by Hu Jia and Wu Hao, a cold laugh suddenly rang out from behind her. She hurriedly turned her head behind, only to see that Bai Shan was using a leg to viciously kick at the closed eyed Xiao Yan.

"Bai Shan, you dare!" An ice cold killing intent flashed across her face for the first time in all these years. The golden glow surged explosively from Xun Er's body. She shook both her hands and actually managed to force both Wu Hao and Hu Jia back with just her own strength. Her body immediately flashed and she appeared in front of Xiao Yan. She extended her arms and hugged Xiao Yan into her chest. However, by doing so, she coincidentally exposed her back to Bai Shan. That leg of his was heavily swung at her shoulder. Immediately, Xun Er's face became slightly red as a faint blood trace surfaced at the corner of her mouth, which she swiftly wiped away.

"Bai Shan! You dare to hurt her!" When he saw a blood trace that flashed

and disappeared from the corner of Xun Er's mouth, Wu Hao, who was extremely sensitive toward fresh blood, could not help but become furious as he turned his body and shouted angrily at Bai Shan. Some fury was also present on Hu Jia's pretty face by his side.

"I only wanted to get Xiao Yan out of the arena. It is Junior Xun Er who got herself injured in order to protect him. How can you blame me?" Bai Shan coldly shouted.

"You don't need to continue to be a hypocrite. Bai Shan, if you are able to leave the competition ground unscathed, I, Xiao Xun Er, will no longer need to continue staying at Jia Nan Academy." An ice cold voice was suddenly emitted from Xun Er's mouth. She slowly stood up. Her autumn water eyes were suddenly, yet gradually, covered by a golden glow. Following the appearance of the golden glow in her eyes, an extremely powerful energy radiated out from Xun Er's body. Her long hair, which extended to her waist, had also begun to grow longer with the increase of energy. From her appearance, it seemed that she was activating a certain Secret Technique.

However, just as Xun Er's growing long hair was about to extend across her buttocks, a white hand suddenly extended out from behind her. It immediately grabbed onto Xun Er's arm and that familiar faint voice caused Xun Er's wildly growing black hair to swiftly shrink. It also caused a smile to surface on her ice cold face.

"Alright, let me handle the rest."

Chapter 424: One versus Three

The faint voice slowly reverberated across the stadium. After which, the skinny, black-robed, young man pulled Xun Er behind him under the focus of a countless number of gazes. He raised his head slightly, and his indifferent gaze stopped on the faces of Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao.

“This fellow is finally awake...” Instructor Ruo Ling and Xiao Yu on the viewing gallery finally let out a long sigh of relief as they stared at Xiao Yan, who had exited his training mode at a crucial moment.

As they watched Xiao Yan, whose aura had become much stronger than before, Bai Shan and the two others clearly understood that the current Xiao Yan had already successfully increased his strength. The fight after this might really be unexpectedly fierce.

There were no ripples in Xiao Yan’s dark black pupils, which were like old wells. Xun Er, who was by his side, however, could clearly sense the brutal emotion that faintly seeped out from within his body. Clearly, the actions of Bai Shan and the other two joining hands to surround and attack Xun Er had enraged Xiao Yan.

“Xun Er, you should withdraw a little first. Let me handle the rest of them.” Xiao Yan said faintly.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, the three of them all possess the strength of a five or six star Da Dou Shi. The Qi Methods that they practice are also not of a low class. Moreover, they also have powerful Dou Techniques . If it is you alone...” Xun Er said hesitatingly.

“Leave it to me.” Xiao Yan repeated once again. A faint, green-colored flame began to slowly seep out from within his body. The high temperature caused the air around him to become blurry until it appeared illusionary.

“Then... alright. I will stand by the side to watch the fight. If there are any unexpected changes, Xiao Yan ge-ge should not blame Xun Er for acting.” When she heard Xiao Yan repeat himself, Xun Er could only nod her head. She slowly pulled back while speaking softly.

Xiao Yan nodded. He once again turned his gaze back to Bai Shan and the two others. A long while later, he slowly said, "If you all walk out of this arena unscathed today, then I, Xiao Yan will never take another step in Jia Nan Academy again!"

Xiao Yan's words caused the expressions of the three of them to change slightly. They could clearly sense the coldness and the suppressed fury contained within these words that the former had spoken.

"Humph, just boast. Although you have currently advanced by one star, you only have the strength around that of a six star Da Dou Shi. This level is just enough to contend with any one of us alone. However, if you want to fight all three of us by yourself, I think that you are only looking to be humiliated!" Bai Shan waved the long lance in his hand and coldly laugh.

"My original intention was not to hurt Xun Er. After you are defeated, I will let Bai Shan pay the price for the kick of his earlier." Wu Hao, whose entire body was wrapped in a blood-colored robe, eyed the calm Xiao Yan as he spoke.

"Hee hee, you must count me in." Hu Jia laughed lovingly.

When he heard the words of the two of them, Bai Shan's expression could not help but change slightly. However, he smiled instead and said, "I also feel extremely guilty of accidentally hurting Junior Xun Er earlier. Later, there is no need for the both of you to act. I will withdraw by myself in order to apologize to Junior Xun Er. However, before this, we must first defeat Xiao Yan before we discuss anything more."

"Isn't it a little late to talk about all this?" Xiao Yan waved his hand and ignored Bai Shan, who wore a cold smile on his face. His hands slowly formed some strange seal in front of him. Following the forming of the seal, the green-colored flame that shrouded the surface of Xiao Yan's body suddenly coagulated. Immediately, it completely entered his body with a 'suo' sound.

Following the disappearance of the green-colored flame, a green-colored flame gradually swarmed into that pair of dark black eyes of Xiao Yan. In an instant, a pair of dark pupils turned into a pair of eyes that were now

filled with a green colored flame.

“The First Change of the Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change: Green Lotus Change!”

The calm voice slowly sounded in Xiao Yan’s heart. When the last word sounded, the aura over Xiao Yan’s body was abruptly withdrawn. An instant later, the aura appeared to be like a volcano, which had broken through the restraint of the land as it erupted forth in all directions!

The green-colored flame Dou Qi hurriedly swarmed out from Xiao Yan’s body. It immediately swept horizontally through the air. The hot flame caused the temperature on the open ground to swiftly rise. Perspiration involuntarily appeared on the faces of some of the students whose strengths were weaker.

At this moment, Xiao Yan’s Qi had already far surpassed the Da Dou Shi class. If one were to vaguely measure it, it was at least something that could stand shoulder to shoulder with a strong Dou Ling!

The faces of a countless number of people in the viewing gallery were shocked and dull as they stared at Xiao Yan in the arena, who was wrapped by a large cluster of flame. They sensed the change in force, which had suddenly soared explosively.

“Dou Ling?” Bai Shan’s expression could not help but change a little as his gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan. A seriousness had similarly surfaced on Hu Jia and Wu Hao’s faces by his side.

“Boom!”

Bai Shan’s voice had just left his mouth when the sound of an energy explosion abruptly rang out from within the flame. A vague, green-colored figure let out a ‘chi’ sound and tore through the hinderance of the air. The ten plus meters between the figure and Bai Shan was shuttled past in less than a second. This terrifying speed caused the eyes of Bai Shan and the two others to be dazzled. A green-colored, flaming figure that was around three meters tall brought a high temperature as it appeared in front of them.

A fist abruptly shot out from within the flames. It turned into three afterimages. Each of them carried the hot green flame and violently smashed at the heads of the three of them.

The speed of Xiao Yan after he had activated the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' had already risen to such a degree that even a Dou Ling of ordinary strength would be unable to match him. Therefore, only when the fist was about to reach their heads did Bai Shan and the two others sense something. Their expressions changed greatly. In their haste, their arms were swiftly crossed in front of their heads. Dou Qi flowed immediately and repeatedly strengthened their defenses.

“Bang!”

The green-colored flame fists landed heavily on the crossed arms of the three of them. Three muffled sounds immediately appeared in an orderly fashion. A sleek redness rose onto the faces of Bai Shan and the two others as their feet rubbed against the ground while they quickly slid back.

After the three of them pulled back for more than ten steps, their feet violently stomped against the ground and they finally managed to redirect the force. They sensed their hands, which had nearly become numb from being struck by Xiao Yan, and shock surfaced on the faces of the three of them. They did not expect that Xiao Yan's strength had actually soared to such a powerful degree all of a sudden. One versus three. Not only did he show no sign of losing, but he also suppressed them until they were at a disadvantage.

“Go all out!”

Bai Shan clenched his teeth and shouted coldly. Silver-colored Dou Qi was suddenly attached to his body. The long, silver-colored lance was shaking in front of him. Dou Qi, like electric snakes, swiftly danced and flashed from the tip of the lance. Following an intense tremble of the lance in Bai Shan's hand, the silver-colored Dou Qi began to agglomerate at the tip of the lance, which emitted soft 'Chi La' sounds. From its appearance, it was clear that he was preparing a Dou Technique with an impressive force.

Beside Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia also hesitated for a moment before their Dou Qi also began to swiftly gallop around their bodies. With their reputation within Jia Nan Academy, their haughtiness caused them to be extremely unwilling to be defeated by the hands of a young man, who was around their age, at the same time with two others. At this stage, it was naturally impossible for them to choose to hold anything back.

As they decided on this thought, a deep, green-colored and blood-colored Dou Qi began to wildly surge out from within Hu Jia's and Wu Hao's body respectively. On top of the whip and the heavy sword, strong offensive type Dou Qi was swiftly being brewed. After their defeat earlier, the current them had begun to go all out to counter attack!

Against everyone's expectations, Xiao Yan did not choose to continue attacking after defeating the three of them with one punch earlier. Under the shroud of the green-colored flame, he had a cold face as he took out a purple-colored Yaowan and stuffed it into his mouth. He began chew it before spitting a mouthful of purple-colored flame, which he finally held in his palm.

Xiao Yan glanced at the purple-colored flame. His right hand shook again and a green-colored flame rose from within it. Xiao Yan slowly raised his head and eyed Bai Shan and the other two who had prepared to go all out just before their defeat. There was not the slightest emotion within Xiao Yan's eyes, which were filled with the green-colored flame. His hands gradually moved closer together. The purple-colored and the green-colored flames began to merge!

Looking at his manner, Xiao Yan was actually thinking of displaying a small scale 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame'... It appeared that the actions of Bai Shan and the two others had truly caused Xiao Yan to be in a furious state.

"That Xiao Yan should have used a certain kind of Secret Technique that can temporarily raise his strength, right? Otherwise, it is impossible for his strength to rise by this much." The Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan, on the organizer's platform eyed the green-colored flame figure, who had ceased moving within the arena, and then Bai Shan and the two others,

who were brewing their powerful Dou Qi on the other side before he slowly spoke.

“The current Xiao Yan likely already possesses the strength of a strong Dou Ling. However, looking at the Dou Techniques that Bai Shan and the two others are displaying, it is clear that they aren’t ordinary things. Under the combined strength of the three of them, even a strong Dou Ling would not dare to carelessly slight them. If Xiao Yan doesn’t intend on letting Xun Er participate in this competition, I’m afraid that it may end up in a stalemate.” An elder in the academy by Hu Gan’s side said with a smile.

“There won’t be a stalemate...” A faint voice was suddenly emitted. The gaze of Old Huo, who sat off to the side, stared intently at the green-colored flame which had wrapped around Xiao Yan as he softly said, “If what I think is happening is not wrong, the competition will end after this attack.”

“Oh?” When the others heard this, even Hu Gan felt a little astonished. He threw his gaze into the arena and a moment later, he suddenly sensed that there was an extremely wild and violent energy ripple that had appeared from it. His expression immediately changed. That sharp gaze of his directly shot toward the green-colored flame, “Good fellow. Exactly what Dou Technique is this Xiao Yan actually displaying? It is actually strong to such an extent?”

The silent atmosphere in the arena lasted for less than a minute before it was abruptly broken!

“Glorious Thunder!”

“Quiet Woods Poisonous Snake Vine!”

“Blood Splitting Chop!”

Within the arena, the eyes of Bai Shan and the two others abruptly widened. The powerful Dou Techniques within their hands were finally brewed to their limits. They shook their weapons abruptly and in an instant, silver, green, and red, three incomparably fierce and powerful energies, Dou Techniques were shot out. Anywhere the three energies passed through, the hard surface ended up completely cracked. Numerous

eye-piercing crack lines spread all the way to the edge of the arena before stopping.

While the three ferocious energies were shooting explosively, an indifferent voice also gently sounded from within the green flame human figure not far away. Immediately, a greenish-purple glow shot out from the green-colored flame in a lightning like manner. Finally, it quietly carried a beautiful, green-purple trail, and suddenly collided with the three energies under the focus of a countless number of gazes!

“Bang!”

The moment they collided, the four energies were at first silent for a moment before an earth-shaking explosion suddenly appeared!

Quickly following this, dense dust rose and spread throughout the arena. At this instant, the entire open ground was turned into ruins!

While they watched the arena, which had basically turned into ruins, the viewing gallery of the arena also descended into a death-like silence!

Chapter 425: No Mercy

Under the focus of a countless number of nearly dull gazes, the dust that permeated throughout the arena slowly dispersed. The complete mess and rock fragments that appeared in their sights caused the viewing gallery to emit waves of sounds created by the sudden inhalation of cold air.

At this moment, the hard arena, which was originally created by neatly piling huge rocks on each other, had actually turned into complete shambles. A deep, expansive pit appeared in the middle of the ruins. Strange rocks were strewn everywhere around the deep pit. Looking at their appearance, the competition arena looked completely different from before. No one had expected that the collision between Xiao Yan and Bai Shan's three man team would actually create such a terrifying destructive strength.

"This fellow... he really is too abnormally strong." Xiao Yu was stunned as she observed the competition arena that had turned into ruins. It was a long while later before she let out a deep breath of air and spoke with a bitter smile. Even though she had already thought highly of her cousin, who had his own independent and special behavior since young, even she did not expect that this fellow would actually become so strong until his strength caused people to become ashamed after not seeing him for only two years.

At her side, Instructor Ruo Ling nodded as she shared the same feelings deep within her. She muttered quietly in her heart. Just exactly how did this fellow train during these two years? Back then, at Wu Tan City, Xiao Yan may have had extraordinary talent, but even after going all out, he could barely survive twenty exchanges with her. Now, however, Instructor Ruo Ling herself thought that her chances of victory were not very high if she were to fight Xiao Yan.

In the ruined arena, where a countless number of gazes had gathered, a green-colored figure suddenly flashed onto the top of a huge rock. Her gaze swept over the ruins and finally stopped at that huge pit. There were still three weak Qis present there.

The dust that rose from the deep pit also gradually settled down. The situation within finally appeared in front of the eyes of everyone present.

Within the deep pit, there was an area which was relatively flat. There were no rock fragments in that area. Instead, there was a thick layer of rock dust. Clearly, at the area where both the energies of both parties collided, the frightening energy explosion had shattered the rock fragments to dust. From this, one could see just how powerful the Dou Qi displayed by the four of them was!

In the empty spot within the pit, three human figures were holding onto the rock wall behind them with their hands. That was the only way they could support their bodies shakily. At this moment, Bai Shan and the other two were extremely miserable looking. Dust covered more than half of their faces. There were also quite a number of spots on their clothes which were tattered. Moreover, the faces of the three of them were pale. Traces of blood were vaguely visible on the corner of their mouths. Their harried breathing had already lost the steadiness it had before. Clearly, under that 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' explosion attack of Xiao Yan, which one would not dare to receive head on, Bai Shan and the two others were seriously injured.

A countless number of gazes paused on the miserable looking bodies of the three of them. There was faint disbelief in their eyes. The three very powerful, top students within Jia Nan Academy this time around, were actually reduced to such a state by the hands of a young man who had merely arrived at the academy less than three days ago?

"Where is Xiao Yan?" Bai Shan wiped the blood trace from the corner of his mouth. He raised his head and his gaze looked all around him. A sleek redness surfaced on his pale face as he said in a hoarse voice, "Looks like he should have been buried under the ruins in that energy explosion. Fighting one against three. He is indeed wildly arrogant but his ending is not good either."

Hu Jia and Wu Hao by his side ignored him. They swallowed their saliva and moistened their dry throats. A long while later Hu Jia clenched her teeth and said, "Dammit. If I had known earlier, I would not have listened

to your incitement. We totally cannot mess with that Xiao Yan!”

“He is very strong, stronger than all of us!” Wu Hao lifted his head. Most of his large, blood-colored robe had been torn. Therefore, it revealed a somewhat white, young face. Wu Hao did not appear very handsome and could only be called ordinary looking. However, the dense, cold, bloody aura that would occasionally flash across his eyes would cause people, who were exchanging looks with him, to feel creeped out. At this moment, solemnness and fear flashed across his eyes, which usually contained a hidden killing aura, for the first time.

“So what if he is strong? Under the combined attack of the three of us, even if he could live, he would at least have broken an arm or a leg!” Hearing the implication of fighting Xiao Yan from the words of the two of them, Bai Shan’s eyebrows were involuntarily knit together as he coldly laughed.

“Bang!”

Bai Shan’s words had just been uttered when a piece of huge rock at the edge of the deep pit in the ruins suddenly blasted apart. The movement attracted all the gazes present, including that of Bai Shan and the two others who were panting with their mouths wide open.

Faint dust permeated over from where the large rock burst apart.

“He... he hasn’t died! I can sense his Qi!” Wu Hao’s eyes stared intently at the cluster of dust. He inhaled a deep breath of air as he spoke slowly.

Bai Shan’s face twitched swiftly by his side. His originally pale face had turned a lot more pale at this moment. Clearly, this talented student, who was one of the top people of the year within the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy, had already formed some fearful emotions toward the black-robed young man that he would not admit within his heart. Especially after the soul-stirring large battle earlier.

Under the focus of all the gazes in the stadium, there was suddenly the soft sound of feet stepping on some rock fragments being emitted from the dust. After hearing the sound of footsteps, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao’s expressions could not help but change.

The sound of footsteps came nearer and nearer. Bai Shan's eyes did not blink as he stared at the dust. A while later, his eyes suddenly shrunk. A black-robed young man, whose clothes were as clean as they were before the battle, slowly walked out from the dust and appeared in front of everyone's sight!

The entire stadium suddenly became quiet as everyone eyed that black robe which appeared brand-new, as well as the calm face of the young man who appeared exactly the same as when he entered the arena.

Who would expect that after experiencing the terrifying energy explosion earlier, this fellow not only did not break his arm or leg as Bai Shan had anticipated, but his Qi had remained forceful and his exterior remained tidy. This appearance was like heaven and earth when compared with the miserable looking Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao.

This difference in appearance had also completely highlighted the victor this time around! No one would think that Xiao Yan, who could keep his initial appearance after such an intense battle, did not have the qualification to become the champion of the Qualifying Competition this time around!

After this fierce fight, the strongest person of the Qualifying Competition had gradually become clear.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge has indeed become strong. The strength of the terrifying flame lotus Dou Technique that he had displayed earlier has almost reached the peak of the Xuan class Dou Techniques..." Xun Er, who was standing on a huge rock, smiled and whispered to herself before she eyed the black-robed young man, who was slowly walking out. There was a faint look of relief and pride currently on her face. She was unconcerned about whether she could be in the limelight and the focus of a countless number of people. However, if Xiao Yan was able to display a strength, which caused people to be shocked, in this kind of place, Xun Er would feel a happiness from within her heart.

Xiao Yan slowly stepped out from the dust. His expression remained indifferent as he carelessly glanced at the three of them. Without any

warning, brutality suddenly swarmed into his dark eyes!

At the same time, Xiao Yan moved his body and it suddenly turned into a black shadow. In a mere instant, it carried a sharp wind sound and a pressurizing aura as he appeared in front of them, causing the breaths of the three of them to become stagnant.

“Xiao Yan, what do you plan to do? We are already...” Bai Shan’s eyes were blurred. He suddenly realized that Xiao Yan had appeared in front of him. His eyes collided with those dark black pupils and coincidentally saw the tyranny and killing intent within them. Immediately, he hurriedly cried out.

However, before his cry sounded, a black shadow swept across his eyes. An intense pain was transmitted from Bai Shan’s lower abdomen. A huge force shook his body until it rolled backward and finally smashed violently into the rock wall. Immediately, the soft sounds of bones cracking could suddenly be heard.

“Xiao Yan, you...!” The sudden attack also caused Hu Jia and Wu Hao to be startled. They immediately reacted swiftly. Their bodies pulled back quickly as they cried out with their mouths.

“How can that kick earlier be so easily offset?” As Hu Jia was hurriedly pulling back, the black shadow entered into close proximity, like a ghost while those cold indifferent words sounded.

“Xiao Yan, you dare!” The cold words caused Hu Jia to feel a chill in her heart. Her voice had also become sharp at this moment. Since she was young until she had grown up, when had she been abused and beaten in this manner, especially given her identity and background?

Xiao Yan’s expression was cold. He did not reply to Hu Jia sharp scream. Without the slightest hesitation, he suddenly swung his right leg. A powerful force that carried a low and deep sonic boom heavily swung into Hu Jia’s lower abdomen, while being watched by a countless number of dull eyes. Following a deep muffled sound, Hu Jia’s body immediately rubbed against the ground, drawing a scar that was over ten meters long before she heavily collided with a rock. Immediately, she spat out a

mouthful of fresh blood.

Faced with Xiao Yan's vengeful chase, Wu Hao did not let out an involuntary cry, like the two people earlier. He clenched his teeth and the little blood-colored Dou Qi remaining within him completely surfaced on his body. When the Dou Qi surfaced, Wu Hao's speed clearly became quite a lot faster.

However, how could Wu Hao, who was in a heavily wounded state, compare to Xiao Yan in terms of speed? The instant after Hu Jia was thrown aside, the black blur was like a shadow following his body, appearing just behind him. An indifferent voice along with a ferocious force suddenly smashed into Wu Hao's back.

"This is payback for Xun Er. If you are not satisfied, you can come and find me anytime. Among the three of you I, Xiao Yan, only view you seriously."

"Bang!"

Wu Hao's body, which was moving backward, suddenly paused. That enormous force that was transmitted from his back directly caused Wu Hao's body to lean forward and collapse. Finally, he became like a rolling gourd that rolled over ten times before he forcefully stopped his rolling body with great difficulty. He wiped the blood trace from the corner of his mouth, lifted his pale face and eyed the black-robed young man. The latter had ceased chasing him and was throwing over an indifferent gaze. Wu Hao swallowed a mouthful of saliva that contained some blood. In so many years, this was the first time that he had been beaten to such a state by someone from the same age group.

Wu Hao's gaze stared intently at the tall and somewhat skinny young man for a long while. Finally, his hoarse voice spat out a word from his mouth.

"Satisfied!"

Chapter 426: The End of the Competition

The sudden attack of Xiao Yan in the arena was beyond anyone's expectations. Moreover, the former attack was completed in a mere instant. Hence, many people in the viewing gallery could only see a black shadow flashing within the arena. Immediately after, there were three muffled sounds, and finally Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao each vomited blood and were forced back before smashing heavily into rocks.

The audience watched Bai Shan and the two others, who were leaning against rock walls, struggling futilely as they made attempts with great difficulty to get up, the entire stadium was quiet. Numerous gazes, that were almost dull, stared at the tall, young man in the arena. At this moment, there was a chill that seeped out from the hearts of a countless number of people. This fellow, who usually appeared to wear a smile, was actually the most terrifying one...

In the viewing gallery, Instructor Ruo Ling and Xiao Yu were similarly stunned. It was a long while before they exchanged looks with one another. Earlier, the manner of Bai Shan and the other two clearly indicated that they were in a defeated state. It was really unexpected that Xiao Yan actually gave another ferocious additional strike. Many people, including the two of them, understood that this was the revenge Xiao Yan took on behalf of Xun Er for that kick...

The Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan, and the others on the middle of the organizer's platform in the stadium were also stunned. A long while later, Hu Gan eyed the pale-faced Hu Jia, who had a trace of blood at the corner of her mouth. His heart felt a little pained. Finally, however, he could only helplessly sigh. He had said earlier that he would not intervene in the matters between the younger generation. Since he had not said anything when Hu Jia and the other two had joined hands together to attack Xun Er and Xiao Yan earlier, now that Xiao Yan's strength had greatly soared and defeated the three of them openly in front of a countless number of people, he had no reason to open his mouth to reprimand Xiao Yan's actions. Hu Jia and the other two had only themselves to blame. Therefore,

he had no choice other than to sigh and shake his head.

“Ke ke, this Xiao Yan is ruthless enough.” On one side, Old Huo’s gaze stared at Xiao Yan in the arena, and ignored the helpless expression of the Deputy Headmaster. He nodded his head and an ugly smile surfaced on his stiff face for the first time.

“Deputy Headmaster, this... is this considered against the rules?” A middle-aged judge in the judges’ seats had a face filled with a bitter smile while he eyed the Deputy Headmaster and the others on the platform above as he carefully asked. If Hu Jia was not present in the arena, he would not have much to fear. Unfortunately, that Little Witch was among them. Moreover, she was beaten to such a miserable state. Honestly speaking, having been in Jia Nan Academy for many years, it was the first time that he had seen someone who dared beat Hu Jia, without mercy, to such a state. This was also not only because of her background but also because Hu Jia herself was an extremely pretty lady. Although her character was unrestrained, causing people to be unable to understand her but her angel-like face and devil-like figure also resulted in quite a number of people in the academy liking her. When fighting against this kind of lady, there were many people in the academy who would give in to her, even if they could win. Very seldom would one see a person like Xiao Yan, who would not show any mercy because of any scruples.

“The competition this time around was originally not considered to be absolutely fair. Therefore, Xiao Yan also cannot be considered to have violated the rules. After all, we have all clearly seen his strength.” The Deputy Headmaster waved his hand and sighed. He immediately turned his gaze toward Hu Jia in the arena and said in his heart, “Girl, treat it as buying a lesson this time around. Being under my protection all these years has resulted in everything being too smooth for you. Being able to have this Xiao Yan knock you around has some benefits for you.”

Xiao Yan exhaled a long breath of air in the arena. He ignored the dull gazes of the entire stadium and turned his head to allow his gaze to meet that of the green-clothed young lady who was on top of a rock within the ruins. A warm smile was drawn on his cold face. Moving his body, Xiao

Yan turning into a black shadow that appeared beside Xun Er. He extended his hand and wipe off the remanent trace of blood from the corner of her mouth before inquiring in a gentle manner, "Are you alright?"

"It cannot even be considered a superficial wound." Xun Er laughed softly. Her eyes immediately flowed over Xiao Yan's body as she pursed up her lips and said with a smile, "It was really unexpected that Xiao Yan ge-ge would actually advance during the fight. It was really shocking."

Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly when he heard this. He patted Xun Er's head before throwing his gaze toward the judges' seats. He asked with a clear voice, "May I inquire if the final round of the Qualifying Competition can be considered over now? If not, I can continue playing with the three of them."

"Yes, yes. The competition is over. Over."

One person from the judges' seats hurriedly stood up and replied quickly when he heard Xiao Yan's voice. The degree of ruthlessness that Xiao Yan had displayed earlier had already far exceeded their expectations. If they were to let him continue on like this, whether Bai Shan and the two others could leave the competition ground alive may be questionable. The background of the three of them were not ordinary. Should something happen, quite a lot of trouble would brew forth.

"The Inner Academy Qualifying Competition this year is over. After an intense fight, the top five have already appeared. They are Xiao Yan, Xiao Xun Er, Wu Hao, Hu Jia, and Bai Shan!" A judge, who was older, stood up from the judges' seats, looked around the stadium before immediately announcing in a loud voice.

Once his voice sounded, overwhelming cheers suddenly rang out from the entire stadium. In this torrent-like sound wave, the entire stadium trembled as it emitted a rustling sound. A countless number of people from the viewing gallery stood up and eyed the young man and young lady, who were standing by themselves amid the rubble. Those people's eyes were filled with envy and respect. Xiao Yan had used his own true strength

to announce to everyone who the strongest person in Jia Nan Academy was this time around. At the same time, he let them know that he, Xiao Yan, had the right to be with an extremely gifted girl, favored by the heavens, like Xun Er!

All of this was built upon his strength and his fists. In this academy, where strength was honored, only this method was the most convincing reasoning!

While they heard the cheers and cries that reverberated throughout the entire stadium, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao within the middle of the ruins, each leaned their backs against the rock wall. Their slightly twitching faces indicated the intense pain that was being transmitted from within their bodies. That earlier blow Xiao Yan had given to each of them had not shown the slightest mercy. Currently, the three of them had already completely lost their fighting strength. Moreover, it was unlikely the injuries of theirs would fully recover without seven or eight days of rest.

Their hurried breathing was somewhat disorderly. The three of them raised their heads and threw their gaze toward the young man and young lady standing above the rubble. The main characters of this entire arena were now them.

“This bastard, he attacked so strongly. He really isn’t a man!” The back of Hu Jia’s teeth bit her red lip. At this moment, her originally clever and sly pupils had partially visible grievances and moisture. In all these years, this was the first time that she had been thwarted by a man. Moreover, that man’s age hardly differed from hers. This caused her haughty heart to really have some difficulty accepting the outcome.

“Xiao Yan, you are very strong, but I believe that I will surpass you!” Wu Hao held his chest as he let out a couple of intense coughs. A sleek redness surged onto his pale face. A heat filled his eyes. The setback he received earlier not only did not cause him to be dispirited but instead it evoked a fighting spirit within him due to Xiao Yan’s strength. This kind of character, where one became more courageous the more he was defeated, was basically an accelerator to him becoming a strong person.

No wonder that Elder of the academy has disclosed that even the mysterious Headmaster said that if Wu Hao were given ten years time, he would definitely become an extremely strong person as long as he was not destroyed by his killing aura!

“This matter is not considered to be over! I, Bai Shan, will definitely get you to pay for the humiliation today a hundred times over! Xiao Yan, just you wait! Sooner or later, I will let you kneel at my feet!” A pernicious glint flashed over Bai Shan’s downcast eyes. He clenched his fist tightly. At this moment, he could not even move his back a little. That heavy strike from Xiao Yan earlier had already broken a couple of his bones. However, compared to the pain on his body, the frustration and the blow to his heart was the one that Bai Shan had the greatest difficulty enduring.

During these two years, he was pushed toward being an outstanding person with the highest profile within the Outer Academy through a countless number of compliments. Today, however, this title of the so-called “person of the year” was actually fragmented by Xiao Yan’s brutal attacks. In the future, when the people of Jia Nan Academy mentioned Bai Shan, they would not be filled with respect like they did when they looked up to him in the past. This was because there would forever be one person standing above his head. That person was the existence whom they respected and looked up to. This kind of situation was undoubtedly more difficult for Bai Shan, whose character was exceptionally arrogant, to accept than if he had lost his life.

Once someone fell after mounting the genius shrine, whom people looked up to, they would feel as though they had an extremely great fall. Many people were unable to bear the dispiritedness or the distortion in one’s heart from this kind of fall. It was almost so for the Xiao Yan back then. The current Bai Shan was also the same!

The current Xiao Yan naturally did not bother about the different emotions within the hearts of the three of them. He only knew that now that he had obtained the permit to enter the Inner Academy, the distance between him and the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ was much closer. He had even begun to anticipate just what kind of drastic and immense change would

occur after he absorbed the second kind of 'Heavenly Flame'? Yao Lao had once said that for the 'Flame Mantra' swallowing one kind of flame was just a foundation. Only after the second kind of 'Heavenly Flame' was also successfully swallowed and the two different flames merged would it cause someone to undergo a thorough change as though one was reborn! Xiao Yan anticipated this kind of feeling. This was because he could faintly tell that after being reborn this time around, it might really let him become a truly strong person!

A strong person who had the ability to seek revenge and protect his own kin! Something different from now where he needed to borrow Yao Lao's ability for everything!

"'Fallen Heart Flame', you belong to me!" Xiao Yan tightened his fist. His emotions surged a little. As long as he obtained that thing, he would truly possess the qualification to be among the strong people in the continent!

As the judge announced the competition to be over, some students wearing alchemist robes flashed down from all over the viewing gallery. They entered the arena and lifted Bai Shan and the two others, who were seriously wounded, before scattering and leaving the place.

"Hei, Xiao Yan, excellent job. Your methods... I, Lu Mu, really take my hat off for you. However, you may have obtained victory today but it is likely that you have offended all three of those fellows. If you have the chance in the future, come and muddle in the Alchemist Department. In this Jia Nan Academy, not even the Deputy Headmaster nor the Law Enforcement Unit dare to do anything drastic to people from our Alchemist Department." A young man who was giving orders to the students from the Alchemist Department to carry away those injured suddenly turned his head over and threw his gaze toward Xiao Yan. It was actually Lu Mu, who was defeated by Xiao Yan yesterday.

"Ke ke, if there is an opportunity, I naturally also want to go to the Alchemist Department to take a look." Xiao Yan smiled as he replied. Which part of his calm manner could one see even a little of the tyranny earlier?

Lu Mu smiled, turned around and followed the Alchemist group out of the competition ground.

“Let’s go, the competition is over. Now, let’s wait for the notice from the Inner Academy.” Xiao Yan eyed the surrounding ruins before he spoke with a smile to Xun Er.

“Yes.” Xun Er nodded with a smile. The two of them slowly walked out of the thundering noisy stadium while watched by a countless number of gazes.

The largest annual competition gradually came to an end as the two of them took their leave.

Chapter 427: The Peace After The Great Competition

Xiao Yan slowly walked on the small, tree-lined trail within the academy. He narrowed his eyes and did not really bother with the heated gazes shot from around him. Ever since he became the champion of the Qualifying Competition two days ago, these kinds of gazes accompanied Xiao Yan. Initially, he was a little frustrated. However, as more time passed, he could only numbly act as though he disregarded them. He had no choice regarding this. After all, their eyes were not under his control.

Today was already two days after the Qualifying Competition had concluded. During these two days, not only did Xiao Yan fully recover from the injuries he received during the competition but his strength had also completely stabilized at the six star Da Dou Shi level. His condition was such that he was basically always in peak condition. The Dou Qi was circulating unceasingly within his body like flood water, causing a comfortable feeling to seep out from all over his body.

According to the rules of the academy, the top fifty students of the Qualifying Competition must begin to prepare to enter the Inner Academy within seven days after the end of the Qualifying Competition. As for Xiao Yan and the others in the top five, they could choose a time to enter the academy's 'Book Collection Hall' within these seven days. They had the qualification to rely on their luck to choose something that belonged to them as a reward.

Xiao Yan was also very interested in that mysterious 'Book Collection Hall,' which even Xun Er constantly kept in her mind. However, the top five people who could enter, according to the rules, had to enter at the same time. Yet, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao, were still lying in the clinic. Based on what he heard from Lu Mu, the three of them could forget about walking without three to five days of rest. While Lu Mu said these words, the gaze which Lu Mu used to look at Xiao Yan was somewhat strange and filled with happiness. Clearly, he was thinking that it was fortunate that

when he was fighting with Xiao Yan, this fellow did not become crazy and beat him up into that miserable state. As a person from the Alchemist Department, the hardship that Bai Shan and the two others had undergone these past two days was something that he had clearly witnessed with his own eyes.

“I wonder what exactly is in the ‘Book Collection Hall’. Hopefully, I can find something suitable for myself.” The warm sunlight passed through the gap between the tree branches, shining on Xiao Yan’s body as he muttered with hope.

“Elder Cousin Xiao Yan.”

While Xiao Yan’s footsteps were walking at a steady pace, a somewhat timid voice suddenly sounded from in front of him. Xiao Yan’s footsteps paused when he heard the voice. He opened his narrowed eyes and looked forward, only to see a group of lively and pretty young ladies. Among this group of young ladies, Xiao Mei was being clustered around like a moon surrounded by stars. Honestly speaking, with Xiao Mei’s appearance, she could be considered among the elite, even in this academy... The current her was somewhat ill at ease while she eyed Xiao Yan, who had walked over. This was a young man, who had used less than ten days to raise his reputation to the peak within this academy, where a countless number of talented individuals gathered.

“Wow, Xiao Mei, he really is your cousin? He is walking over, walking over...” Beside Xiao Mei, those young ladies eyed Xiao Yan, who was slowly walking over. A flush involuntarily and swiftly surfaced on their faces. They pulled Xiao Mei as they softly shouted somewhat excitedly.

The reputation that the current Xiao Yan possessed within Jia Nan Academy had basically surpassed Bai Shan’s in the past. Before, his act of fighting one against three had been relished by a countless number of students. As they repeatedly conversed of the event between one another, Xiao Yan’s position swiftly rose among many students. This, in addition to the fact that Xiao Yan’s face also belonged to the delicate and handsome class, despite not being extremely handsome, and that his face frequently contained a warm smile, resulted in many young ladies winking at him

during these short two days. A man who had strength was filled with charm.

As Xiao Yan's reputation rose within the academy, it also caused his original reputation of being extremely thorny, which had been passed around due to him having taken two years leave, to become synonymous with having a great amount of character.

Young people were like this. If it was a person whom they liked and respected, they would all try their best to ignore or remedy any shortcomings he had in the past and do their best to let him become the most perfect person in their hearts. The current Xiao Yan did not give any explanation but that bad reputation of him skipping classes for two years had been twisted into "being full of character..."

Xiao Yan slowly walked toward the somewhat uneasy Xiao Mei. He smiled and nodded toward her before stopping in front of her. He carelessly chatted a little with her while smiling. After which, he brushed past Xiao Mei.

Although Xiao Yan's face was warm and had a smile, Xiao Mei still felt an unfamiliarity from within it. As she heard the envious voices of the young ladies around her, she felt the tip of her nose ache a little. Her pupils were filled with a gloominess. Originally, they could be very close. She did not need this kind of superficial greeting. Instead, she would rather he display anger toward her. That way, she would at the very least feel rejoiced. If there was anger, it meant that she was worth him being angry over. Yet, this calm manner of Xiao Yan's caused her to feel an extreme pain in her heart. Hating a person was not being angry at her, but to completely ignore her. The current Xiao Yan appeared to have already reached this stage.

All of this was the result of a mistake in her attitude back when she was still a child!

As Xiao Yan brush passed her, Xiao Mei drew her nose and tried her best to not let the moist air agglomerate in her eyes. Although the regret in her heart tortured her until she could not wait to hug someone and have a

good cry, she lifted her pretty face and forcefully smiled at the young ladies around her, who still had envious gazes. After which, she turned her body to leave.

“That’s right, can you leave with me? I want to tell you something.” Just as the dejected Xiao Mei was about to leave, a smiling voice suddenly rang out, causing her body to stiffen on the spot. She hurriedly turned around, only to find the warm faced Xiao Yan. After being startled, she hurriedly nodded. She did not say goodbye to the young ladies around her as she swiftly followed Xiao Yan under the envious gazes of those young ladies.

Strange gazes followed them the entire way as Xiao Yan led Xiao Mei slowly toward a quiet lake. He stood in front of the lake and was quiet for a moment before telling her about all the things that had happened to the Xiao clan in detail. No matter how one put it, Xiao Mei was a member of the Xiao clan. She had the right to know that the clan had moved. Moreover, Xiao Yan felt guilty regarding the matter of the clan moving. If it was not because of his conflict with the Misty Cloud Sect, the clan need not be implicated in this manner. Although this clan had not left him with a good impression since he was young, the clan was ultimately the blood and sweat of his father and the various ancestors of the Xiao clan. Now that his father was missing, he, Xiao Yan, must become the acting Clan Head of the Xiao clan. One would know about this from the moment the three elders decided to hand him the mysterious jade piece, which was a family heirloom that also possessed the ability to store a speck of the spirit belonging to the Clan Head. This was because the jade piece was the symbolic status of the Clan Head of the Xiao clan over the generations.

“The clan has moved?” Xiao Mei was also startled when she heard the news. Her eyebrows knit together slightly. She eyed Xiao Yan’s expression and the intelligent her blinked her eyes. She guessed, “This is because of the matter regarding the Misty Cloud Sect, right?”

“Yes.” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly before becoming slightly quiet. His tone had suddenly become much more cold, “I killed one of their elders and after that, our ties have been strained since. I will settle this matter properly with them when I return to the Jia Ma Empire in the future.

During this period before I return, you should try to not return to the Jia Ma Empire as much as possible. If your movement is exposed, you and the clan may receive a destructive blow.”

Xiao Mei nodded obediently. The corner of her eyes glanced at Xiao Yan as she softly said, “Elder Cousin Xiao Yan, rest assured that no one in the Xiao clan will blame you for this matter. I’m afraid that even those Elders would feel extremely proud that you act like this. In so many years, there aren’t many people who dare or have the qualification to fight with people from the Misty Cloud Sect.”

Xiao Yan smiled when he heard this. He immediately nodded and said, “Hopefully. The Xiao clan is my father’s blood and sweat. I will do my best to protect it.”

“The current Elder Cousin Xiao Yan is able to do it. Back then...” Xiao Mei’s words suddenly came to a stop. Her pretty face became pale and her hand really wanted to pull at her own mouth. It was not easy to finally have some warm atmosphere, but she had to choose to bring up that matter.

“Yes, let the things back then stay in the past. We are no longer children and there is no use to keep remembering those things.” Xiao Yan’s gaze stopped on the sparkling surface of the lake. He turned his head and eyed Xiao Mei’s worried manner before saying, “No matter what happens, you are always my younger cousin... If you have some problems in the future, you can come and find me. Although I don’t have the strength to protect the clan’s fate in the Jia Ma Empire, I am able to ensure that the members of the Xiao clan will not be bullied within this Jia Nan Academy.”

Xiao Mei smoothed out a breath within her heart. These words of Xiao Yan’s caused an additional smile to appear on Xiao Mei’s face as she nodded.

“Alright, I also need to return. Remember, if there is a problem, come find me where Instructor Ruo Ling stays.” Xiao Yan smiled and patted Xiao Mei’s shoulders. He immediately turned around before walking to the outside of a small path.

Xiao Mei stood on the same spot and eyed the figure, which had become distant. She suddenly cracked a smile. This appeared to be an opportunity to break the deadlock between the two of them, right?

.....

Five days after the Qualifying Competition was over, Xiao Yan went to see Instructor Ruo Ling. Xun Er and Xiao Yu were both present when he returned to Instructor Ruo Ling's unique home. In front of them also stood a middle-aged man, who was wearing the academy's Instructor robe.

"Ke ke, what is this about?" Xiao Yan smiled and asked as he walked into the living room. He turned his gaze toward Xun Er.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, this is Instructor Ku Lu." Xun Er smiled and stepped forward. She smoothly received Xiao Yan's jacket and said gently, "Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao have already recovered. According to the rules, this afternoon is the time when we will enter the 'Book Collection Hall'."

Xiao Yan's footsteps paused a little. He was a little surprised. Immediately, he smiled and nodded. It had finally arrived. He had highly anticipated this so-called mysterious 'Book Collection Hall'. Now, he hoped that it would not disappoint him...

Chapter 428: The Mysterious Book

Collection Hall

The book shelves were staggered within the brightly lit room. There were all kinds of ancient books placed on the book shelves, giving it an exceptional scholarly atmosphere. At this moment, there were three people standing in the middle of this room. Behind the table, which was in front of them, was a white-haired old man, who was slowly flipping through the documents in his hands. The entire room was in a silent atmosphere.

The three people standing in the room were two males and one female. If one were to carefully observe them, they were actually Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia, who had been beaten by Xiao Yan until they were seriously injured. At this moment, Bai Shan and Wu Hao had their eyes lowered. Their faces may still be a little pale but their complexion was much better compared to the day of the competition. On the other hand, Hu Jia had her eyes wide open as she looked at the old man flipping through the book. A long while later, she stuck out her tongue, appearing aggrieved.

After the silent atmosphere continued for nearly ten minutes, the Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan, finally shifted his eyes away from his book. He said faintly, "Don't count on me to help you vent your anger. This is something you've inflicted on yourselves. If you have the ability, you can directly go and hit Xiao Yan to vent your anger. However, I am not going to bother as for who is able to defeat who. The Jia Nan Academy does not prohibit those kinds of fights. As long as you want to, you can do so any time."

"Hmph, it is not as though I expect you to do anything. I was defeated in that manner that day because I was caught off guard. I had not used my trump card. Otherwise, we don't know who exactly would have won or lost." Hu Jia snorted as she continued, "I am just angry that this fellow actually doesn't know how to be tender to a woman. At the very least, I am

also a girl. Can't he be a little gentler when he attacks? I do not have rough skin and thick flesh like the two of them."

Hu Gan could not resist laughing when he heard Hu Jia's muttering. He replied helplessly, "At that time, who cares about showing tenderness to a woman. The three of you joined hands to attack him alone. If Xiao Yan was to still hold back, then it really was unjustifiable. Of course, that last action of his also caused me to be extremely surprised. That kid is definitely a ruthless fellow."

"The three of you should not become enemies with him because of this matter. Young people should be more open minded. It is not worth becoming enemies over such small matters. Xiao Yan's future potential is extremely terrifying. Remember, one more friend is better than one more enemy. Moreover, this enemy has reached the stage of causing one to feel creeped out." Hu Gan eyed the three people in front of him and spoke to them earnestly.

"Hmph, women are the ones who can really hold a grudge. I remember that kick. He better not give me an opportunity." Hu Jia curled her lips and said.

Hu Gan laughed when he heard Hu Jia putting it like this. With his understanding of the former, he naturally understood that whenever it was a time like this, she would really no longer bear any grudge. However, it was clear that Xiao Yan's kick did indeed cause some resentment to remain in Hu Jia's heart. She might not become enemies with him in the future, but it was likely that she would not display any friendly expression to the other party.

"I will not view him as an enemy, but I will view him as an opponent that I must surpass." Wu Hao responded calmly.

Hu Gan nodded slightly. This Wu Hao was indeed a person that was crazy about combat. However, it was also because he was such a person that he would be able to walk even further on the path of a strong person. No wonder the Headmaster was extremely optimistic about him.

"Ke ke, we were merely sparring to exchange pointers. It is extremely

normal to be injured. Why would we bare a grudge?” Bai Shan gave his reply. One could not see the slightest anger on his face, which was full of a smile.

However, it was this smiling manner of Bai Shan that caused Hu Gan’s eyebrows to knit slightly without leaving a trace. As the Deputy Headmaster of the Jia Nan Academy and with his shrewdness from living for so many years, how would he not be able to hear whether these words of Bai Shan were hypocrisy or truth?

Hu Gan looked deep into the smiling Bai Shan but he did not continue to speak. He clearly understood the latter had greatly enjoyed being sought after by others during these years. Now that Xiao Yan had beaten him until what he had enjoyed was shattered, his heart would definitely be extremely unwilling to let bygones be bygones. However... he hoped that this person would not do anything stupid. Hu Gan did not think that the young man, who dared to use his own strength to challenge an entire sect within the Jia Ma Empire, would be someone ordinary.

“Creak.”

The clear sound of the room’s door being opened suddenly sounded quietly. A voice was transmitted into the room, “Deputy Headmaster, Xiao Yan and Xun Er have arrived.”

“Let them in.” Hu Gan closed the book in his hand and smiled as he spoke. Immediately, he turned his gaze toward Bai Shan and the other two and said, “When you all enter the Inner Academy in the future, you might have to fight and struggle together. Therefore, don’t turn your relationship sour. If the new students who enter the Inner Academy each year do not form groups, their fates are not very nice. Additionally, strength is honored within the Inner Academy. Whoever has a harder fist will be able to obtain the best training conditions. Whatever background you have will be useless once you are there. That includes my power.”

Hu Gan’s gaze stared intently at Hu Jia when he said the final sentence. The meaning within it was understood without being spoken.

Hu Jia’s mouth twitched. Although she was noncommittal within her

heart, she still nodded on the surface.

Not long after Hu Gan's voice sounded, two human figures slowly walked in from where the door was. Their gaze swept once around the spacious room before finally stopping on Hu Gan, who was behind a table. The two of them took two steps forward and bowed.

"Ke ke, the two of you have finally arrived." Hu Gan smiled as he watched the two of them. His gaze paused a little longer on Xiao Yan's face. During the ten days since Xiao Yan had arrived at Jia Nan Academy, this was the first time that Hu Gan had exchanged gazes at such close proximity with this top student, whose reputation had already reached the peak of the academy.

Mild and gentle. Two words suddenly came leaping out from Hu Gan's heart the first time they looked at each other. He muttered a little in his mouth, only to laugh bitterly. These two words, and the wildness that Xiao Yan had displayed during battle were two complete extremes.

After Hu Gan carefully stared at those dark, black, ink-like pupils for a while, his sharp, old eyes finally sensed an irritability and restlessness that was like a flame flowing under the calmness. The manner was like a tranquil mountain that was hiding a volcano. At anytime and anywhere, the frightening volcano could erupt into terrifying energy and angry flames that would leave one speechless.

"The Dou Qi in his body appears to be gently circulating but it faintly emits a restless feeling, like that of a volcano. Looks like this should be related to the 'Heavenly Flame', which he controls." Hu Gan's gaze swept over Xiao Yan's body and was actually able to sense the nature of Dou Qi within the other person's body. This skill was indeed worthy of being the Deputy Headmaster of Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy.

"Since you are all here, I shall not continue to be long-winded. You should all know the reason as to why I called all of you over." Hu Gan stood up from his chair and said with a smile, "You are the top five students of this Qualifying Competition. According to the rules, you have the qualification to enter the 'Book Collection Hall' to try your luck."

As he spoke, Hu Gan walked to a wall behind him. His hand randomly tapped a couple of times on it and a soft, deep rumbling noise resonated. A dark tunnel immediately appeared in front of the five of them.

“Follow me.” Hu Gan waved his hand at the five of them and took the lead in entering the dark tunnel. Behind him, Hu Jia, whose face was filled with curiosity, followed him without any hesitation. Following which, Wu Hao and Bai Shan entered. Only after they had entered did Xiao Yan pull Xun Er and carefully enter this dark, black tunnel. These years of training had forged that cautious character of his.

After entering the tunnel, Xiao Yan discovered that there were huge glowing pearls inserted in the walls. The faint glow shone onto the tunnel until it appeared a little hazy. However, this little bit of light was already sufficient for Xiao Yan and the rest.

The atmosphere was quiet within the tunnel. There was only soft rustling footsteps. Xiao Yan swept his gaze over Hu Gan, who was leading the way in front of them. The hand which he used to hold Xun Er grew a little tighter. As a new person who had just arrived, it could not be said that he was familiar with this Jia Nan Academy. He similarly had very superficial knowledge of the character of the extremely strong Deputy Headmaster.

Having seemingly sensed Xiao Yan’s anxiety, Xun Er gently patted his hand, smiled at him and shook her head.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly and inhaled a deep breath of air. His emotions gradually recovered to being calm, and his footsteps also became a little quicker.

After walking in the tunnel for nearly half an hour or so, a bright light finally appeared at the end of the tunnel. When they saw this light, the footsteps of the few people within the tunnel also became much faster. A moment later, they finally arrived at the end of the tunnel and took one step out of it.

Eye-piercing light scattered down from the horizon, causing Xiao Yan and the others to shut their eyes habitually. A long while later, they slowly

opened them and looked at the scene that appeared in front of them. They were slightly shocked.

At this moment, the scene that was in front of Xiao Yan and the others was clearly a certain valley groove. That precipitous mountain wall extended all the way up vertically. Finally, it extended all the way to the edge of one's sight. Within the three surfaces of the cliff, there was coincidentally an extremely spacious empty land. At this moment, a massive, ancient pavilion, which was so large that it left one speechless, was standing there.

Their gazes slowly swept across the large, ancient pavilion and finally stopped on an extremely ancient horizontal signboard that was on the pavilion. On it, three words, that had become blurry due to the destruction of time, appeared faintly visible.

Book Collection Hall!

The ancient words may have undergone the destruction of time but Xiao Yan and the rest still felt shock at the rustic artistic conception contained within those words. It was worthy of being the mysterious Book Collection Hall of the Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy. Just this horizontal signboard had already revealed its status.

Hu Gan led the five of them as they slowly walked toward the Book Collection Hall. They were about to enter a twenty meter distance from the Hall, when Hu Gan suddenly stopped. He cupped his hands in the direction of the Book Collection Hall and said, "The top five names for this year's Qualifying Competition have already been born. According to the rules, I have brought them here. Elders, please open the door!"

Hu Gan's words were carried by Dou Qi as they reverberated unceasingly within the small mountain valley. They did not disappear for a long time.

Not long after Hu Gan's words sounded, Xiao Yan's eyes, which were staring intently at the Book Collection Hall, suddenly shrunk. His gaze shifted abruptly. Finally, they stopped on the two grey-robed figures, who were seated cross-legged on the ground. When they had entered earlier, he clearly saw that there was not a single person here!

Yet, at this moment, these two grey-robed people appeared, as though they had been sitting here all this while. This bizarre scene caused some chillness and shock to appear in his heart. On top of being shocked, however, the interest he had for this Book Collection Hall grew increasingly dense. For it to be treated this solemnly by the Jia Nan Academy, it was likely that the things that were placed here should also not be some ordinary things.

“This place is indeed worthy of being part of Jia Nan Academy. Its heritage is indeed rich.”

Chapter 429: The Mysterious Guardians of the Hall

Hu Gan's voice slowly dissipated from the mountain valley. However, there was not the slightest movement from the two gray-robed human figures. It was as though they did not hear him.

Although he saw that there was no reply to his words, Hu Gan also did not speak again. He maintained his posture of having his hands cupped together as he waited quietly.

Behind Hu Gan, Xiao Yan, and the others faced each other after seeing this scene. Even Hu Jia, who had a lawless character, also wisely kept her mouth shut. She had never been here before, but she knew that with Hu Gan's status in Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy, there was hardly anyone that could compare with him. However, he was now this courteous in front of these two gray-robed human figures. From this, one could see just how frightening these two gray-robed human figures guarding the 'Book Collection Hall' were. She may be lawless, but she was no fool. She knew who she could provoke and who she could not.

In the silence, the finger under Xiao Yan's sleeves suddenly gently rubbed the dark, black, ancient ring. His drooping eyebrows could not help, but knit together. This was because he had discovered that ever since the two mysterious gray-robed people appeared earlier, the thread that represented the connection between Yao Lao and himself had actually completely disappeared. This kind of situation was a first ever since he had come in contact with Yao Lao.

This kind of connection was between both parties. However, Xiao Yan did not taken the initiative to sever the connection. In that case, it was clear that it was Yao Lao who had taken the initiative to cut it. Yao Lao had never done such a thing in the past. Now, however... Xiao Yan blinked his eyes. He looked at the two gray-robed people at the pavilion as he exhaled quietly within his heart. By being able to cause Yao Lao to be fearful enough to cut off all connections, these two people were indeed

frightening. This was worthy of being Jia Nan Academy, a place where tigers and dragons hide...

The quiet atmosphere in the mountain valley continued for nearly ten minutes before the robes of the two gray-robed human figures seated crossed-legged at the main entrance of the hall moved slightly. Immediately, two pairs of calm, old, well-like eyes, similar to those of an old monk, were lifted slightly. They swept indifferently across Hu Gan and the others one at a time before finally and suddenly stopping on Xiao Yan's body. Their gray robes trembled slightly and there was a soft hoarse exclamation that was quietly emitted, "Heavenly Flame?"

The soft sound slowly reverberated through the quiet mountain valley, and also clearly entered the ears of Xiao Yan and the others.

"May I know what the name of this young friend is?" The gaze of one of the gray-robed men remained on Xiao Yan. There was a vicissitudinous that was accumulated with time seeping out from within his hoarse voice.

Hearing that the gray-robed person actually cast Hu Gan aside and questioned Xiao Yan instead, everyone in the valley was startled. Immediately, they turned their heads and threw strange gazes at Xiao Yan. From the respectful attitude that Hu Gan had used to treat the two gray-robed men, it was clear that these two people had an extraordinary position within the academy. Yet, Xiao Yan was able to cause the two of them to form a little interest in him. This kind of treatment caused Hu Jia and the rest to quietly be envious.

Xiao Yan was also startled at the gray-robed person's question. He immediately and hurriedly cupped his hands together as he spoke respectfully, "This little one, Xiao Yan, greets both Elders."

"The flame tends toward a greenish color. The flame is like a lotus and a volcano. If the old me is not mistaken, the 'Heavenly Flame' that young friend controls should be the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' that is ranked nineteenth on the 'Heavenly Flame Ranking'." The old voice resounded beside Xiao Yan's ear, causing his calm heart to suddenly tighten. There was an additional fright in the eyes that he used to look at the two gray-

robed people. This mysterious gray-robed person was the first person who had managed to see through the exact details of his flame before he had even displayed the 'Green Lotus Core Flame'. This person was truly frightening!

Xiao Yan's throat rolled a little as he nodded slightly. His gaze glanced over to Xun Er and the rest around him before he realized that it was as though they had not heard the words that the grey-robed person had said earlier. He could not help but become stunned. His heart came to an immediate and sudden understanding. This was likely a trick of the two mysterious gray-robed people.

"Being able to control a 'Heavenly Flame' at such an age, how truly gifted..." The gray-robed person on the left side gently sighed. There was some admiration within his voice. Immediately, he shifted his gaze toward Hu Gan and said with a hoarse voice, "The top five this time around are much better than the previous five."

Hu Gan sighed in relief when he heard these words. He smiled as he said, "Since that is the case, can I request both Elders to open the Space Lock."

"Space Lock?" The foreign name caused Xiao Yan and the others to become blank.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, look at the spot in front of Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan." Xun Er's soft voice was suddenly transmitted into Xiao Yan's ears. The latter lifted his head and took a look. Initially, there was still some doubt on his face. A moment later, the doubt gradually disappeared and was replaced by a grave expression.

Xiao Yan's eyes stared intently at the place around half a meter in front of Hu Gan. A moment later, he realized that if he were to carefully observe the space there, one would actually be able to discover very shallow folds. These folds were hidden in the air and were extremely difficult to discover. Xiao Yan's gaze followed the movement of the appearing and disappearing folds before he suddenly realized that the folds of this space had nearly become something like a wall – protecting

the entire 'Book Collection Hall' behind it!

"This is a Space Lock. An extremely strong mirror knot that only a strong Dou Zun would have the ability to lay. This Space Lock is left behind by a predecessor of the academy a few hundred years ago. If we didn't have the two Elders inside to use a special method to open it, even a strong Dou Zong would not be able to break in." Hu Gan, who was in front, seemed to clearly understand the loss that Xiao Yan and the others felt as he gave a smile and explained.

Xiao Yan and the others nodded their heads in sudden comprehension. Their hearts were, however, slightly shocked. A mirror knot that even a strong Dou Zong was helpless to break. This was far too frightening.

The two gray-robed people outside of the pavilion slowly extended their pair of shriveled hands from within their sleeves. Immediately, they began to use their fingers and their palms to slowly form some hand seals. As the seals were formed by their hands, Xiao Yan could clearly sense that there were two extremely strong, shapeless ripples that were being emitted from their palms, like waves.

The shapeless ripples gradually disappeared and finally came into contact with those folds in space. When the two came into contact, the space in front of Xiao Yan and the others immediately became like a mirror that appeared to be formed by water as circles of ripples repeatedly surfaced. A moment later, the ripples ceased and something like a door was slowly being pulled open by a formless, large hand.

"Let's go." Hu Gan waved his hand when he saw the doorway into this space. After which, he took the lead and walked in. Behind him, Xiao Yan and the others hesitated for a moment before they carefully walked into this shapeless doorframe.

After taking one step through the shapeless door, Xiao Yan realized that the sight in front of him had become much brighter. The eyes, which he used to look at the pavilion had also become a little clearer. They had truly entered into this Locked Space.

"Ke ke, we have troubled both Elders." Hu Gan smiled and said to the

two gray-robed people seated cross-legged outside the hall.

“It is but our duty.” The two mysterious human figures wrapped in gray robes did not even move their bodies as a hoarse faint voice slowly sounded.

“You can all enter the ‘Book Collection Hall’ now. Remember, no matter what you want to obtain, you cannot insist and forcefully try to obtain it. That is because there is an energy layer added to everything here. If your hand is able to pass through the energy layer without any resistance, you can take away the thing inside. Of course, no matter how many you can take, you can only bring one of it out of the ‘Book Collection Hall’. Do not be greedy. Otherwise, you will gain nothing at the end, just like if you try to fetch water with a bamboo basket.”

TL: Bamboo Basket – Cookie Jar example for western cultures

“If you cannot pass through the energy layer, then you should give up. With your current strength, you cannot break them. There are quite a number of people among those who enter the ‘Book Collection Hall’ every year who end up returning empty handed. Therefore, leave everything to fate. Don’t try to forcefully take those things that you are unable to.” Hu Gan pointed at the ‘Book Collection Hall’ with his finger as he explained the situation to Xiao Yan and the others.

Xiao Yan and the rest nodded when they heard this. They exchanged glances with one another before they finally and slowly lifted their legs and walked toward the ‘Book Collection Hall’.

Only the rustling of footsteps sounded in the quiet mountain valley. Xiao Yan and Xun Er walked at the back of the group. The few of them passed through the grass patch in front of the pavilion. They finally stepped onto the green rock steps, which had been ravaged by time until they were full of potholes.

There was a green layer that covered the rock stairs. When one stepped on it, one would feel that they were somewhat slippery. However, it was fortunate that it did not pose much of a hinderance to Xiao Yan and the others. They followed the green rock stairs and walked for a while before

arriving in front of the 'Book Collection Hall'. When they raised their heads to eye the ancient horizontal signboard, a desolate feeling spread out from it, lingering over everyone's heart and did not disappear for a long while.

"Cough..."

A hoarse cough suddenly sounded, awakening the five of them from their absent-minded state. The five of them were blank before they hurriedly and immediately moved their sight away from the horizontal signboard.

"What a weird horizontal signboard. It actually has the demonic strength to attract people's mind. Why is it that every part of the 'Book Collection Hall' is filled with this mysterious aura?" Xiao Yan lowed his head and sighed while muttering in his heart.

"Go in. The door will only be open for one hour. After one hour, you must come out regardless of whether or not you have obtained anything."

The sleeves of a gray-robed person to the left of the five of them was blown by the breeze until they fluttered. The tightly-shut main door immediately let out a creaking sound as it was slowly opened, revealing a dark tunnel behind.

As the main door was opened, an ancient, bleak aura came pouncing toward them. It caused Xiao Yan and the others to hurriedly tighten the defense of their mind, not daring to have even the slightest thought of something else.

Hu Jia, who was leading them inhaled a deep breath of air and took the initiative to step into the 'Book Collection Hall'. Behind her, Bai Shan and Wu Hao hesitated for a moment before following closely.

"Let's go, Xiao Yan ge-ge." Xun Er pulled Xiao Yan's hand and spoke with a smile as she eyed Hu Jia and the two others, who had disappeared in the black tunnel.

"Yes. Be careful." Xiao Yan nodded. The corner of his eyes swept past the two mysterious gray-robed human figures beside him. He immediately

pulled Xun Er and walked into the 'Book Collection Hall'. Finally, they quietly disappeared endured by their soft footsteps.

After all five of them entered the 'Book Collection Hall', the main door, which was open, began to creak as they were slowly closed. Finally they were tightly shut.

As he once again watched the tightly closed main door, Hu Gan sighed gently and said with a smile, "Hopefully these little fellows can find the things that they like. It is a very rare opportunity to be able to enter the 'Book Collection Hall' of the Jia Nan Academy. They must not waste it."

Chapter 430: Fighting and Grabbing

When he heard the sound of the main door behind him being tightly shut, Xiao Yan's footsteps paused for a moment. Immediately, he once again pulled Xun Er as they walked forward. After five minutes, a pale, yellow-colored light was transmitted from a spot not too far in front of them. Their footsteps became involuntarily quicker. After a while, they finally passed through the dark, black tunnel, and a brilliant light shot at them, causing them to turn their heads away.

The place, which appeared in front of both Xiao Yan and Xun Er, was an extremely spacious, large room. On the walls around the room, there were nearly ten energy barriers. At this moment, these energy barriers were slowly releasing and pulling back a light glow, shining through the entire room until it was like daytime.

Hu Jia and the two others had already arrived at the room. When they heard the sound of footsteps, the three of them turned around to take a glance. Hu Jia took a step forward upon seeing the two of them and smilingly said: "Xun Er, we can huddle together after we enter the Inner Academy in the future. Although I have never entered the Inner Academy, I heard from my grandfather that if one wanted to obtain the best training conditions, one must see whose fist is harder. Therefore, if we, these new students who has just entered, were to separate, we will definitely be unable to avoid being oppressed and bullied."

Hu Jia's gaze merely swept once across Xiao Yan before she leapt at him. Clearly, she still bore some grudges within her heart towards the ruthless attack which Xiao Yan had inflicted upon her a couple days before.

"Ke ke, that's right. If the new students who has just entered are not united, it is very easy for them to be bullied." Bai Shan, who stood beside her, laughingly said: "However, I have a brother from my clan who has already stayed in the Inner Academy for two years. When that time comes for us to enter, as long as Junior Xun Er and all of you are with me, we can definitely avoid the most difficult transition period for new people with him looking after us."

“Ke ke, we appreciate Senior Bai Shan’s good intentions. It is good enough for us to rely on ourselves with regards to these matters.” Xiao Yan laughed softly. His gaze immediately looked all around him and a shock surfaced in his eyes. It appeared that this huge room was already the end of the ‘Book Collection Hall’. Why was it that he could not see anything?

The corner of Bai Shan’s mouth twitched slightly when he heard Xiao Yan’s words. A dark coldness involuntarily surfaced on his smile-filled face before it immediately disappeared. He said thickly in his heart: “If you don’t want to do things the easy way, then fine. Then I’ll let you act as though you are tough. I hope that you can still be this tough after you enter the Inner Academy. At that time, I want to take care of you until you crawl out of the Inner Academy!”

“Stop looking. There does not seem to be any other place. All there is are those strange energy barriers. Don’t tell me they want us to enter?” Hu Jia’s mouth twitched as she said upon seeing Xiao Yan’s gaze sweeping in all directions.

Xiao Yan could not help but furrow his brows slightly when he heard this. What was their intention?

Just as Xiao Yan and the few others were at a loss in the enormous room, there was suddenly a slight sound of rushing wind that sounded in the room. Although that voice was extremely mild, it was undoubtedly as clear as a muffled thunder to Xiao Yan and the rest. Immediately, the gazes of the few of them hurriedly followed the noise and move. Finally, they stopped at an energy barrier that was to their left side.

“That spot... it seems there is something that is about to appear?” Xun Er eyed the energy barrier there as she said uncertainly.

“Appear?” Xiao Yan was slightly startled. He did not have the time to reply when his heart suddenly tightened. Before he made a move, he saw a cluster of purple light suddenly shooting out explosively from within the energy barrier. It immediately turned into a ray of light that shot towards the five of them.

“Be careful!” When they saw the purple light shooting over, Bai Shan and the others, who did not know the details, hurriedly dodged. Xiao Yan’s body leaned to one side and avoided it. While he was pulling back, his mouth did not forget to shout at Xun Er, who was standing at her original spot, without even moving.

Xiao Yan’s cry had just sounded when the purple light suddenly increased its speed and shot ferociously at Xun Er. The latter stared intently at the purple light and extended her hand in front of Xiao Yan’s face, which had immediately changed color. She actually directly grabbed at the purple light.

“Chi.”

Her pretty hand grabbed the purple light with her palm in front of the gazes of everyone in the room. After which, the purple light slowly disappeared, and a purple scroll, that was wrapped by a layer of energy appeared in her hand.

“Xuan Class High Level Qi Method. Purple Lightning Burst?” As Xun Er held the purple-colored scroll, she hand probed a little and actually passed through the energy layer without any hinderance. She eyed the words that were written on the surface of the scroll and could not help but read it out softly.

“Qi Method?” Xiao Yan and the others were black as they heard Xun Er’s voice. Immediately, they suddenly came to an understanding. The things would actually automatically be spat out from those energy barrier...

At the moment that Xiao Yan and the others came to a sudden understanding, a great cluster of rushing wind noises sounded once again. Quickly following this, one energy cluster after another, which were of different shapes and colors, were spat out from the energy barrier from all directions. After which, shuttled without stopping through the enormous room, carrying a humming rushing wind sound.

Seeing those energy clusters, which carried different momentums, a joy surfaced on Xiao Yan’s face. His feet sprung from the ground and his body rushed up into the air like a cannon ball. He hurriedly grabbed with his

hand and when he landed on the ground, there was already a cluster of pale-green light in his palm.

As his gaze passed through the green light, Xiao Yan was able to discover that within the cluster of light, there was actually a medicinal ingredient, which entire body was like an emerald. His eyes swiftly swept across the emerald medicinal ingredient and finally stopped on the jade-like fruit at the top portion of this medicinal ingredient. Xiao Yan's heart quivered: "Sky Jade Fruit?"

According to what Xiao Yan knew of the 'Sky Jade Fruit', this thing can be directly consumed and would be able to let a person's Dou Qi's strength be raised by around one star. If it was used to refine medicinal pill, it would definitely be a mysterious pill that could directly raise the strength of a strong Dou Wang should one succeed. This thing belonged to the category of a 'sky-high price' outside and was extremely difficult to find. It was really unexpected that there would actually be one of it being spat out within the 'Book Collection Hall'. This really caused Xiao Yan to be speechless.

"Unfortunately, although it is rare, it is not the thing that I need now." Xiao Yan was somewhat unwilling as he sighed while holding this 'Sky Jade Fruit' in his hand. He relaxed his palm and the former once again turned into a green glow that shot upwards before finally infiltrating into the bright energy barrier that permeated the place and quietly disappeared.

"Xun Er, snatch them!" Xiao Yan tilted his head and shouted loudly to Xun Er. His body moved according to his intentions and hurriedly grabbed at a cluster of light.

As Xiao Yan's loud cry sounded, Bai Shan and the others appeared to have also began to respond. Immediately, their few figures of theirs began moving, turning into numerous shadows that swiftly flashed within the room and repeatedly grabbed the clusters of light that were shot out from the energy barrier.

In an instant, the entire room was filled with whistling sounds. Xiao Yan

and the few others hurried all over. Once they found that the item they grabbed was not suitable for themselves, they would hurriedly abandon it and continue to maximize the use of the time to snatch a treasure that suited them.

“Ha ha, Di class Dou Technique?” A joyful laughter suddenly sounded within the room filled with whistling noises. Xiao Yan and the others hurriedly turned their heads around and coincidentally saw that a cluster of silver-colored light had been caught and raised high in the sky by Bai Shan’s hand. From the glow that was vaguely visible, Xiao Yan and the others could faintly see that the thing inside appeared to be something like a scroll.

Bai Shan held the silver-colored cluster of light tightly. He could not resist smiling gloatingly at Xiao Yan as his hand swiftly inserted itself into the silver glow. However, just as his hand had just made contact with the interior of the silver-colored cluster of light, an enormous repulsive force abruptly appeared and suddenly shook off his hand. Immediately, the light grew very bright and forcefully broke free from Bai Shan’s hand. It turned into a ray of light that shot into an energy barrier.

Bai Shan was startled as he eyed that silver-colored light cluster, which shot straight back into the energy barrier and disappeared. His expression immediately and abruptly became gloomy. With a furious roar, his body transformed into a white shadow and heavily smashed against the energy barrier.

“Bang!” Bai Shan collided heavily onto the energy barrier. The energy barrier did not even move a little but the former shot back explosively. A mouthful of blood was thrown up. Finally, he smashed onto the wall on the other side.

Xiao Yan and the others were stunned as they watched the Bai Shan, who had been laughing gloatingly a moment ago, be shaken until he spat out blood and forced to pull back. They exchanged gazes with one another and the corner of their mouths could not help but twitch slightly. A typical case of a tragedy formed from extreme joy. Did this fellow forget that the Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan had said to follow fate just before they had

come in earlier?

“Cough...” Xiao Yan let out a dry cough and temporarily halted his actions. He smilingly said to Bai Shan: “Senior Bai Shan, are you alright?”

Bai Shan climbed to his feet with a green face. He ignored Xiao Yan. Instead, he raised his head once again and threw his gaze towards the countless number of light clusters whistling in the space above the room. A moment later, he feet pushed off the ground and his body shot out once again.

Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders. He took two step back and placed himself next to Xun Er as he whispered: “Although those things are isolated by an energy layer, if one carefully observe, one can still faintly see some clues. Remember, look specifically for those energy cluster with a greater energy undulation and grab them.”

“Yes, alright.” Xun Er nodded slightly when she heard Xiao Yan’s reminder. She did not continue the pointless snatching. Instead, she quietly stood on the spot as her gaze tightly focused on energy barrier, which was unceasingly spitting out clusters of light.

By her side, Xiao Yan closed his eyes. In this kind of place, the Spiritual Perception strength that he was endowed with was his greatest advantage. He was able to observe the strength of the energy cluster that had yet to appear before other people.

Xiao Yan’s Spiritual Perception permeated throughout the entire room. His body did not move even a little. Even when some energy clusters occasionally flew in front of him, he did not show the slightest reaction. These things were not worthwhile for him to move his hand to grab it.

The silence persisted for nearly ten minutes. Xun Er had already grabbed five to six energy clusters during this period of time but none of them had reached the level which she wanted. Therefore, all of them were thrown back.

In an instant, the heart of Xiao Yan, whose body had maintained its motionless state, suddenly tightened. His eyes opened abruptly. Without any forewarning, his feet pressed against the ground and his body shot

explosively towards an energy barrier that was towards the left. Just as Xiao Yan's body moved, a fiery-red glow let out a 'xiu' sound as it shot explosively out of the energy barrier.

The moment the fiery red glow appeared, the temperature of the entire huge room also rose by quite a bit. Therefore, the gaze of Bai Shan and the others were also hurriedly thrown over. When they saw the momentum that this fiery red glow carried, they were momentarily startled before they immediately shot explosively over as a conditional reflex.

However, just as they have just started moving, Xiao Yan, who had discovered this cluster of fiery red glow before them, had turned into a black shadow before suddenly appearing. He grabbed with his palm, withstood the heat that was transmitted from it, and pulled the fiery red glow into his hand. His body immediately shot back and Xun Er also came flashing forward in an extremely intelligent manner, blocking Bai Shan and the other two.

"Hee hee." Xiao Yan parted his mouth and laughed in the direction of Bai Shan and the other two. He grabbed the fiery red glow as he went over to Xun Er's side. When his gaze swept the interior of the glow, he was immediately a little startled. His throat rolled slowly.

"Not bad, it is indeed something good..."

Chapter 431: Sonic Dou Technique

Within the fiery-red cluster of light in Xiao Yan's hand was a pale-red scroll. The high temperature was also being emitted from within it. If one's gaze passed through the glow and scanned across the pale-red scroll within it in detail, one would vaguely be able to see a few words on top of it.

“Nine Layer Phoenix Flame Skill, Di Class Middle Level.”

The simple few words caused Xiao Yan to strain himself and swallow a mouthful of saliva. Di class Middle level. Since Xiao Yan was born until now, a Qi Method at this kind of level was the highest level Qi Method he had ever seen. Even if this kind of Qi Method was placed in the ‘Black-Corner Region’, where stolen or smuggled goods from the continent flowed through, it would definitely be able to set off a sensation. Countless number of factions would fight over this Qi Method until their heads broke and their blood was spilled. However, this Di class Qi Method, that had a value which was difficult to determine, landed in Xiao Yan's hand in such an easy manner. It really was somewhat drama like.

Xiao Yan's palm tossed the extremely light scroll in his hand. His hand, however, felt a somewhat heavy feeling. Something that he would never imagine getting his hands on in the past was now randomly spat out from this mysterious ‘Book Collection Hall’. The vast collection that the Jia Nan Academy owned caused Xiao Yan to be endlessly shocked.

The gaze of Bai Shan and the two others sparkled as they stared at the fiery red cluster of light in Xiao Yan's hand. Up till now, this scroll was the item which had caused the greatest commotion. Although they did not know exactly what it was, they were able to vaguely guess the range of its class.

“Hei, you three, what is it? Aren't you going to grab by yourself? Don't tell me that you are thinking of snatching it from me?” Xiao Yan tossed the fiery red glow in his hand and smilingly said. Although there were three people in the other party, whose strength were not weak, Xiao Yan

had Xun Er as his helper on this side. Even if they were to really fight, the other party would not be able to gain anything good.

“Ke ke, Junior Xiao Yan must be joking. However, you have also said earlier that these things rely on fate. It was with your ability that you were able to grab it, but you can only be considered to have truly obtained it if you have the luck to take it out from the cluster of light. Otherwise, what happened to me earlier would be an example.” Bai Shan glanced at the fiery red cluster of light in Xiao Yan’s hand as said with a faint smile: “I want to see whether Junior Xiao Yan has this luck.”

Xiao Yan’s eyebrows were slightly knitted together when he heard this. He exchanged glance with Xun Er. His right hand held the fiery red cluster of light, while his left hand was slowly extended into it. After which, he gently made contact with the fiery red cluster of light.

The hearts of Bai Shan and the others were also suddenly raised when they saw Xiao Yan’s action. Their eyes stared intently at his hand.

Light that permeated the place shot past them. Numerous clusters of light repeatedly flew past in front of them. However, none of them were currently in the mood to stop them. Instead, they threw their gazes on Xiao Yan’s body. When faced with such a good thing, many people had the attitude of ‘if I cannot have it, you can also forget about getting it’. Therefore, they really wanted to be happy over Xiao Yan’s misery when they saw Xiao Yan’s depressed appearance over failing to obtain the item.

Xiao Yan’s hand was slowly passed to the cluster of light. A warm feeling spread from his palm. However, for Xiao Yan, who frequently played with fire, this little temperature was merely a small dish. His hand gradually extended into the cluster of light and a moment later, finally met with a feeling of resistance. He slowly exhaled and clenched his teeth. His hand abruptly pressed downwards, and the fiery red glow suddenly became brighter. A wild joy immediately swarmed up onto Xiao Yan’s face as his hand was extended into the cluster of light in a lightning like manner and immediately drew it out once again. There was an additionally dark-red-colored scroll in it.

“Ha ha, looks like my luck is quite good.” Xiao Yan held the dark, red-colored scroll tightly. The excitement on his face was difficult to hide while he laughed out loud.

“Hmph.” Bai Shan’s expression could not help but become a little ugly when he saw Xiao Yan actually succeeded in obtaining the item. He snorted and shifted his gaze away from Xiao Yan, beginning to look for the next target to catch.

Hu Jia and Wu Hao also eyed the dark red scroll in Xiao Yan’s hand with eyes that were filled with envy. A moment later, they could only turn their heads around and look for their prey.

“He he, congratulations, Xiao Yan ge-ge.” Xun Er turned her head over and said smilingly to Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan smiled. He stroked the dark red scroll in his hand gently. A moment later, he suddenly tossed the scroll over to Xun Er and smilingly said: “It is useless for me to hold this Qi Method. If Xun Er likes it, I will give it to you. In all these years, I have never given you such a valuable item.”

“This fellow is really generous. That is a Di class Qi Method...” Although most of the attention of Bai Shan and the two others were placed on searching for a target, the action where Xiao Yan tossed the Qi Method to Xun Er was similarly seen by them. This was especially when they heard that last sentence which Xiao Yan had said. They could not help but be stunned. Their expressions immediately became a little strange. Di class Qi Method. This was a priceless item. Was this fellow not a little too generous?

“Uh?” Xun Er was a little stunned when she received the scroll. However, she shook her head and said with a gentle voice: “During the Qualifying Competition, I observed the color and the degree of power of your Dou Qi during your battle. I think that the Qi Method that you are practising is merely of the Xuan class, right?”

“It temporarily is.” Xiao Yan helplessly nodded. The current ‘Flame Mantra’ had indeed only evolved to the Xuan class.

“You still want to give it to me? This Qi Method is obviously of the fire affinity and is more suitable for you.” Xun Er said in an annoyed manner.

“Due to some reasons, I cannot change my Qi Method. Therefore, other than giving it to you, I have not the slightest use for it.” Xiao Yan spread out his hand. He could not explain the matter regarding the ‘Flame Mantra’ too clearly. Immediately, in order to prevent Xun Er from continuing to pursue him with more questions, he could only give a displeased face as he said: “Hold it if you want it. If you don’t want it, just throw it.”

When she saw Xiao Yan’s expression, Xun Er pursed up her lips and give a sweet smile. She said: “Alright. Coincidentally, I now need a transition Qi Method. This thing is just suitable.”

“That’s right, what does Xiao Yan ge-ge want to look for? Let Xun Er help you look for it.” Xun Er said softly.

“I need a scroll containing a Sonic-type Dou Technique.” Xiao Yan frowned a little before sighing: “I don’t know if I can find one here.”

“Sonic-type Dou Technique?” Xun Er was startled when she heard this. She immediately voiced her thoughts: “This kind of unorthodox Dou Technique is extremely rare. We can indeed find some low class ones, but I think that Xiao Yan ge-ge would not be attracted by ones of those class. A high class one, however, is extremely difficult to find. Ah, we can only try our luck.”

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded. He raised his head and eyed the dense light cluster in midair and could not help but feel the skin on his head becoming slightly numb. The treasures that are collected in this ‘Book Collection Hall’ had actually reached such a terrifying number. If those people in the ‘Black-Corner Region’ were to know about this, they might all become crazy. No wonder this ‘Book Collection Hall’ was hidden so stealthily. Moreover, there are even two mysterious grey-robed people with frightening strength guarding it.

After giving that scroll containing the Di class Qi Method to Xun Er, Xiao Yan once again shut his eyes. He relied on his Spiritual Perception

strength to probe those light energy clusters. As Xun Er did not have such an outstanding Spiritual Perception ability, she could only rely on her senses to grab. However, the chances of obtaining what she was looking for by using this method was too low. Even after grabbing over ten clusters of light, Xun Er did not find what she needed.

The other three people in the 'Book Collection Hall' had all obtained something that could grudgingly be satisfied with after putting in an immense amount of effort. Moreover, they were able to successfully take the object out of the light cluster. Bai Shan obtained a silk armor that was nearly transparent. This thing had a shocking defensive strength. If one were to discuss its ability to endure being hit, it had surpassed the inner vest, which could resist the Amethyst Winged Lion, that Yun Yun had given Xiao Yan back when he was in the Jia Ma Empire. Hu Jia had obtained a purple-colored pill with an unknown effect. As for Wu Hao, he appeared to have obtained a scroll containing a Dou Technique. However, he did not let slip even a little information about the class of the item after obtaining it. Therefore, other than himself, Xiao Yan and the others were uncertain just what use the Dou Technique, which he had obtained, had.

At this moment, there was only ten minutes remaining till the one hour limit, that they could stay in the 'Book Collection Hall', was up. However, the Sonic Dou Technique, which Xiao Yan had anticipated, did not appear.

A pale-green shadow flashed down from midair. Xun Er wiped off the perspiration on her forehead. She waved the cluster of light in her hand towards Xiao Yan and said with a bitter smile: "Rank six Monster Core from a Magical Beast... this is also a rare good item. Unfortunately, it is not what we need."

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. As time slowly flowed by, the tension of his Spiritual Perception also grew tighter and tighter. At a certain instance, the heart belonging to him, whose Spiritual Strength was tensed till the extremely, suddenly trembled. The Spiritual Perception, which permeated the entire room, sent an extremely tiny vibration in the air into his mind.

"This vibration..." Xiao Yan's tightly closed eyes snapped opened. His body was like a cannonball, which shot directly into the air. His hand

violently grabbed at a cluster of light before he landed steadily on the ground.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, have you obtained it?” Xun Er hurriedly asked when she saw Xiao Yan’s action.

Xiao Yan slowly spread open the cluster of light in his hand. His gaze passed through the light and swept within it. Initially, he nodded but he immediately sighed in disappointment: “I have indeed found one, but unfortunately... it is merely a Huang class High level Sonic Dou Technique. This is quite a big gap from what I had expected.”

“What should we do? Why don’t we continue to wait awhile?” Xun Er said hesitatingly.

“There is not enough time.” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly. He lifted his head to look towards the other side of the room only to coincidentally see Bai Shan’s gloating gaze. He shook his head and could not be bothered with him. Facing Xun Er, he said: “Forget it, let’s go. Although its class is low, I can first improvise and use it.” Once he said this, he turned his body and walked towards the path which he had entered from.

“Hee hee, Junior Xiao Yan, looks like you are the person with the worst luck.” Behind him, Hu Jia and the other two also followed them, due to the constraints of time. Bai Shan’s could not resist the comfort in his heart when he saw Xiao Yan’s depressed face as he opened his mouth and said.

“Are your bone itchy for another beating?” Xiao Yan’s footsteps suddenly paused as he tilted his head and said with a cold smile.

Bai Shan’s expression changed slightly. He gave a faint smile, but did not continue to speak. In his heart, he said darkly: “You can now continue to be arrogant. There is much for you to see once you enter the Inner Academy!”

When he saw that Bai Shan did not dare to reply, Xiao Yan curled his lips with disdain. Finally, he glanced at the energy barrier, which was still spitting out items at a slowing rate. He sighed in his heart, turned around, and was about to leave.

“Xiu!”

The instant Xiao Yan turned around, the glow of energy barrier at a corner suddenly became brighter. Immediately, a sharp, strange sound sounded throughout the entire room. That strange sound passed through the air and was propagated out turbulently, causing the spirit of Xiao Yan and the others to be a little absentminded.

he absentmindedness merely lasted for an instant before it disappeared. Xiao Yan’s walking footsteps suddenly paused. He immediately and suddenly turned around as his body’s speed was unleashed to its maximum. Finally, he turned into a black shadow that shot explosively towards an energy barrier within the room.

At the moment when Xiao Yan acted, a transparent energy cluster shot out from that energy barrier. Following its appearance, the sharp sound waves basically turned into a ripple-like form that spread throughout the room.

Chapter 432: Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar

As the transparent energy cluster was shot out, a sharp sound wave turned into substance-like ripples, and began to spread in all directions, with the energy cluster acting as an epicenter.

Bai Shan and the others were startled at this disturbance, which had suddenly appeared. Immediately, they swiftly came to an understanding. Each of their expressions were different as they watched that black shadow, which Xiao Yan had turned into, shooting out wildly.

Under the observation of the few people in the room, Xiao Yan unleashed his speed to its limit and appeared in front of the transparent energy cluster within two blinks. His hand was curled slightly, like the claws of an eagle, as he grabbed at the energy cluster in a lightning-like manner.

Seemingly having sensed Xiao Yan's actions, that energy cluster, which was originally shooting forward, suddenly paused. It shook immediately and actually began to retreat in order to dodge him.

"Humph." Sensing the nearly conditional reflex-like dodging of the transparent energy cluster, Xiao Yan let out a cold laughter. He shook his sleeves and his hand appeared to have been elongated by a section. With a grab of his claw-shaped hand, he firmly caught the transparent light cluster into his palm.

Once he obtained the thing, Xiao Yan's body did not show the slightest hesitation as he withdrew in a lightning-like manner. At this very same instance, an enormous suction force suddenly exploded out from the energy barriers within the room. Under the pull of this suction force, the energy globs that lingered and permeated the room was unceasingly being pulled back into the energy barrier. In an instant, the light clusters that permeated the place shuttled past. Countless number of light clusters, which had been spat out earlier, with the exception of the items in Xun Er, Bai Shan and the others hands, which energy covers had been broken,

were once again being completely swallowed by the energy barrier at this moment.

As he sensed the suction force being emitted from the energy barrier, Xiao Yan knew that this was all because they were approaching the end of their time limit. His hand grabbed the transparent light cluster in his hand, that was repeatedly shaking, wanting to flee. This thing also felt the drag of the suction force and began to want to escape from Xiao Yan's restraint.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, quickly try and see if you can obtain the thing within it!" Xun Er hurriedly reminded when she saw Xiao Yan's hands, which were being sucked until he was dragged towards the barrier.

Only after hearing Xun Er's words did Xiao Yan recover. His right hand held the light cluster tightly, while his left hand was abruptly inserted into it.

"Bang!"

Xiao Yan's hand was inserted into the light cluster while being watched by the few of them. An instant later, a enormous force suddenly surged out and actually directly repelled Xiao Yan. Moreover, this repulsion force was large. It was sufficient to cause Xiao Yan to take quite a few steps back before he could neutralize the force.

"Damnit. I actually cannot." Xiao Yan's expression immediately became ugly when his hand was blocked. At this moment, the suction force, that was being emitted by the energy barrier, also became increasingly stronger. There were only a few countable light clusters still lingering within the entire room.

A gloating cold smile involuntarily surfaced on Bai Shan's face as he looked at Xiao Yan's hands, which were being bounced off the light cluster.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, hold tight. Let me try!" A green-colored shadow flashed beside Xiao Yan. Xun Er's hand was also swiftly extended into the energy cluster.

Seeing Xun Er becoming increasingly close to the cluster of light, Xiao Yan's heart was also suddenly raised. If even Xun Er was unable to, then this Sonic Dou Technique, which had reached his hands, was likely to grow wings and fly away. At that time, Xiao Yan really could only make do with the Huang class Sonic Dou Technique from earlier.

Under the intense focus of gazes in the entire room, Xun Er's hands were abruptly inserted into the light cluster. A moment later, the kind of resistance that Xiao Yan had faced earlier did not appear. Joy surfaced on Xun Er's face. Her hands merely stopped for an instant within the light cluster before it was swiftly withdrawn. A crystal clear-like scroll appeared in everyone's eyes.

As he eyed the scroll, which Xun Er had successfully removed, Xiao Yan's nervous heart finally calmed down. He let out a smile on his face as though he had placed down a heavy burden.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, here." Xun Er rubbed the perspiration on her bright and smooth forehead. She was also very afraid that her failure would lead to Xiao Yan's disappointment. Fortunately, however, the worst case scenario, which she had expected, did not appear. She smiled and handed over the transparent scroll in her hand to Xiao Yan.

"It's really thanks to you." Xiao Yan received the scroll and said with some heart palpitations. If it was not for Xun Er being here, it was likely that he would have to watch this thing, which had already reached his hands, once again be swallowed back with his own eyes. He licked his lips and turned his gaze towards the words on the scroll within his hands. Initially, he was a little startled, but he immediately nodded with satisfaction.

"'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar', Sonic Dou Technique, Class: High Xuan class. When the lions and tigers roar in union, all beasts submit. It has the enormous strength of shattering gold and shaking the soul..."

Xiao Yan read the words on top of the scroll once, and felt a great satisfaction within his heart. The thing which he currently needed most, was a Sonic Dou Technique of this class. If it was too low, he would scorn

it. If it was too high, it would be too difficult to practice and it was likely that he would have difficulty truly practicing it until he had enough power which might be a long period of time. After all, the higher the class of the Dou Technique, the higher the difficulty of practicing it would be.

“I have finally obtained it...” Xiao Yan released a long breath. He carelessly threw away the High Level Huang class Dou Technique which he had obtained earlier. When it left his hand, it was wrapped by a cluster of light and finally shot back into the energy barrier before disappearing.

“Let’s go.”

Xiao Yan kept this Xuan class High level Sonic Dou Technique inside his storage ring and waved his hand at Xun Er. Immediately, he took the lead to turn around and walked into the tunnel, which he had entered from earlier. When he passed by Bai Shan, his footsteps paused for a moment and spoke to him with a faint smile: “Looks like I have to disappoint Senior Bai Shan. I have gotten my hands on the thing that I need.”

Once he finished saying that, he did not continue to stay. Instead, he and Xun Er turned around and walked back into the dark tunnel.

“umph.” Bai Shan snorted coldly when he saw Xiao Yan’s smiling expression. His face was dark and solemn as he followed. Behind him, Hu Jia and Wu Hao also followed closely.

As the five of them left, the ripple-like energy barrier surrounding this room also began to slowly become smaller. An instant later, the energy barrier turned into a small point, which completely disappeared with a tiny ‘crack’ sound. At this moment, the entire large room also became empty. No one would have expected that this place was filled with countless number of treasures, which would cause a stir in the outside world, just minutes earlier.

“Creak.”

The tightly-shut, ancient main door was suddenly gently pulled open. A warm sunlight followed the gap of the door and shone into it, shining a long light trace within the dark tunnel, that reached all the way to the end...

The main door was opened. Xiao Yan and the four others walked out. They stood at the stairs and eyed the lush, green color of the valley. Their hearts could not resist sighing in relief. The atmosphere within the 'Book Collection Hall' was indeed a little too heavy.

"The space occupied by this 'Book Collection Hall' is so vast. I'm afraid that the large room which we had entered is merely one of the corners. Mystery is really seeping out from all over this place..." After walked out of the main door, the corner of Xiao Yan's eyes swept over the two grey-robed people, who were seated on both sides, like old monks in meditation, without leaving a trace as he spoke to himself in his heart.

Upon hearing the sound of the door opening, a robe of a grey robe person suddenly moved a little. Xiao Yan and the others immediately sensed a vast and majestic shapeless energy scanning them. The strength of that energy caused an aghast to surface in their hearts.

The shapeless energy appeared to only have the purpose of scanning them. Therefore, it lasted for only a short ten seconds before it withdrew like the tide until it completely disappeared.

"Time is up. You can go. Remember, you cannot reveal even a little bit of everything that happened here, including the information about the interior of the 'Book Collection Hall'." A hoarse, old voice slowly lingered over where the main door was.

Xiao Yan and the others hurriedly lowered their heads when they heard this.

"Ke ke, have all of you come out?" When he saw the five of the walking out, Hu Gan, who had been standing in front of the pavilion, said with a smile: "All of you didn't leave empty handed, right?"

The five of them nodded.

"That's good. No matter whether the thing you obtained is what you wanted, at the very least, you have gained something." Hu Gan smiled when he saw this. He bowed towards the two monk-like, grey-robed people beside the main door and said: "Since these little fellows have already come out, I shall not disturb you two Elders in your training.

Goodbye.”

The two grey-robed people still did not have any response towards Hu Gan’s words. Hu Gan also did not mind. He waved his hand at Xiao Yan and the others and said: “Follow me.”

Hearing Hu Gan’s voice, Xiao Yan and the four others also bowed towards the two grey-robed people, who sat cross-legged without moving, much like wooden pillars. They slowly walked backwards, walked down the green rock stairs, before turning around and arriving at Hu Gan’s side.

Hu Gan’s gaze swept over the five of them. Only when he saw that they were not injured did he once again cupped his hands towards the two grey-robed people, turned around, and walked towards the invisible doorway which was being pulled open by a shapeless large hand.

“Follow me. Don’t touch those spatial folds. Otherwise, even I cannot save you.” Hu Gan turned his head around and reminded when they were about to pass through the doorway. After which, his upper body remained still as he strided out, stepping across the doorway in one go. Behind him, Xiao Yan and the others carefully followed. None of them dared to make even the slightest dissimilar movement.

After they safely passed through the invisible doorway, an energy ripple was slowly formed. Xiao Yan turned around and take a look, only to see that the invisible doorway, which was ripped opened, had already begun to slowly disappear. A moment later, an extremely tight space fold wall once again appeared, hiding the ‘Book Collection Hall’ behind it.

Xiao Yan’s gaze leapt across those spatial folds, that were difficult to sense and swept across the main entrance of the ‘Book Collection Hall’. His expression suddenly changed slightly. Those two grey-robed human figures, who were originally still seated cross-legged there earlier, had strangely disappeared at this moment. This movement that could be called specter-like caused a chill to continue to rise within his heart. Just who exactly were these grey-robed people guarding the ‘Book Collection Hall’?

“This Jia Nan Academy could still stand after so many years while staying at the danger filled ‘Black-Corner Region’. They do indeed have an

extremely substantial foundation...” Xiao Yan sighed in his heart and shook his head. He swiftly followed Hu Gan and the others in front and once again entered into that mountain cave which he had come from earlier.

Following the disappearance of Xiao Yan and the others, this small mountain valley, which was hidden in an unknown location, once again reverted into the silence it had before. Only until the end of next year’s Inner Academy Qualification Competition would this place once again be opened...

Chapter 433: Training

Within the spacious study, Hu Gan eyed the wall beside the study, which was slowly closing. Only then did he turn and face Xiao Yan and the four others in front of him. He said smilingly: "Alright, it can be considered that you all obtained your reward. Rest for the next two days. In two days, you will all be entering the Inner Academy. At that time, there will be chances for you all to cry bitterly."

Xiao Yan and the others watched Hu Gan's smiling manner. They exchanged glances with one another before nodding slightly.

"That's right, I will remind you once again that if the new students entering the academy want to avoid being bullied by the older students, the only way is for your fist to be harder than theirs. Of course, students who can enter the Inner Academy are basically the past top students of the Outer Academy. Their training talent is not weak. Adding this to the unique training methods in the inner academy, it is likely going to be a little difficult for you new students, who have just entered, to catch up to their progress." Hu Gan's gaze swept across the five of them as he said: "Therefore, I advise all of you to try your best to abandon the enmity between each other and cooperate. Otherwise, you would suffer quite a bit in the end."

"Don't tell me that our hands and legs will be broken or we will be killed by those fellows?" Hu Jia rolled her eyes, while the other people were non-committal. In order to be able to become the top five of the Qualifying Competition, which of them did not have the ability to defend themselves?

"It is unlikely to be the case. After all, this place is an academy, not a battlefield. However, that feeling of others using their strength to trample over you is ultimately not a good one, right? Which of you fellows is not filled with arrogance in your heart?" Hu Gan smiled and shook his head while he said.

"Alright, if there is nothing else, all of you can go back. Report here two days from now. I will bring all of you into the academy at that time."

When he saw Hu Jia twitching her lips, wanting to say something, Hu Gan's face immediately became stern as spoke while waving his hands towards Xiao Yan and the others.

"Deputy Headmaster, thank you for your reminder. We will pay attention to it." Xiao Yan nodded a little. He bowed and greeted Hu Gan before he immediately leaving together with Xun Er. Behind him, Hu Jia and the other two also left one after another.

"These fellows don't know what pain really is without having collided into a wall. Once you enter the Inner Academy, you will realize that surviving there is very tough. That place has never lacked talent..." Hu Gan sat on his chair and eyed the few people who had left. He tapped his finger against his table and said helplessly.

After entering the 'Book Collection Hall' and obtaining the thing which he needed, Xiao Yan used the remaining two days to enter into the large mountain behind the academy. He used all his effort to search for a secluded training ground, and thus began to study the two kinds of Dou Techniques he had obtained.

Although Xiao Yan was not too concerned about Hu Gan's words, a premonition within his heart caused him to faintly feel an impulse telling him that he needed to quickly raise his strength. If he was alone, it would not matter. However, now that Xun Er was also following him as they entered into the Inner Academy together, as a man, he naturally needed to protect her until she did not feel even the slightest bit of danger. Moreover what Hu Gan had said did have some logic to it. Which of those people, who could become the top fifty of Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy, were not geniuses who had been gathered from all over the continent? If he lacked some foundation, even Xiao Yan would not dare to say that he could muddle along very well within the Inner Academy that he did not know much about.

Therefore, the current Xiao Yan needed to raise his strength as soon as possible. He would not be able to make much progress in terms of Dou Qi cultivation during this short period of time. Therefore, he could only rely on the two kinds of Dou Techniques in his hands.

“Three Thousand Lightning Movement.”

“Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar.”

One was a Low Level Di class Dou Technique, while the other was a High Level Xuan class Dou Technique. One was a Agility-type Dou Technique, while the other, a Sonic-type Dou Technique. One to dodge, one to attack. If Xiao Yan wanted grasp some of the knowledge of the two Dou Techniques, it would clearly not be an easy matter, even with Yao Lao’s help. Therefore, after some consideration, Xiao Yan first placed his focus on the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’. This High Level Xuan class Dou Technique was clearly much easier to practice compared to the Low Level Di class ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’. Moreover, it was an extremely unorthodox attacking technique. If he were to fight with people in the future, it could obtain the effect of catching someone off guard.

Of course, this so-called ‘much easier to practice’ was built on the foundation of the comparison between the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’ and itself. No matter how one put it, the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ also belonged to the High Level Xuan class. If an ordinary student was able to possess one type of technique of that class, he would be able to rely on it to stand out amongst his peers. Therefore, the difficulty of practicing it was also at an extremely tough level. This was especially so for people like Xiao Yan, who was practicing a Sonic Dou Technique for the first time. The difficulty was multiplied when he practiced it.

This place was a small-sized waterfall, which was surrounded by lush, green, dense forest. A silver river-like waterfall brought a loud rumbling sound as it flowed off the cliff and rolled down. Finally, it smashed against the mountain rocks and splashed water everywhere.

On a certain mountain rock, just below the waterfall, a black-robed young man had his mouth wide open with a flushed expression on his face. He emitted a soft roar. That roaring sound of his was quite strange. It appeared like a tiger roar, but also appeared to be a lion roar. The roaring reverberated throughout the mountain unceasingly before overlapping with the sound of the waterfall splashing down, shaking the surface of the

lake until circular ripples began to spread outwards.

“Roar... cough, cough...” Xiao Yan once again let out a roaring sound with a flushed face before he could finally not resist coughing intensely. He did his best to swallow a mouthful of saliva to moisten his burning throat. With a bitter laugh, he said: “Isn’t this damn Sonic Dou Technique too difficult to practice? I have roared for nearly an entire afternoon. My throat is about to become mute. Yet, it is still this lethargic tone. Can this really be used to attack?”

At this moment, if one were to carefully listen to Xiao Yan’s voice, it was clearly much more hoarse compared to two days ago. It appeared that in order to practice this so-called ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’, he had suffered quite some hardship.

“It can already be considered quite good that you can mostly imitate the roar of a tiger and lion within a day. As long as you continue to diligently practice, you will sooner or later be able to control the strength of the roaring sound and not end up causing your own throat to be injured.” Yao Lao smiling voice sounded within Xiao Yan’s heart.

“I also want to spend the entire day and night imitating. However, didn’t teacher said that there is a strict daily time limit when one practices this kind of Sonic Dou Technique? It seemed to be three hours, right? Once one has exceeded this time limit, one would place an extremely great burden on one’s throat. If one is not careful, one might turn into a mute.” Xiao Yan’s hand scratched his throat, which was beginning to feel some pain, as he helplessly said.

“This is indeed so for an ordinary person. However, with me around, do you still need to worry about this small problem?” Yao Lao smiled proudly.

“Teacher has a solution?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He immediately and hurriedly asked.

“Have you gathered all of the medicinal ingredients that I asked you to prepare last night?”

“They are gathered... the medicinal ingredients warehouse in Jia Nan City is far richer than that of the Jia Ma Empire. I have let Xun Er help me

to prepare all of the medicinal ingredients that you need.” Xiao Yan nodded and said.

“Take out the medicinal ingredients. After which, refine one thing by yourself. I will transmit the medicinal formula into your mind.” As Yao Lao’s voice sounded, Xiao Yan’s mind suddenly swelled. Immediately, he felt that there was a heap of information being forcefully stuffed in.

“‘Ice Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’, an assistance type medicine. It is able to relieve various searing pains and protect the throat, such that it would not be affected and destroyed by the sudden appearance of heated energy. The medicinal ingredients needed to refine it are: Ice Spirit Leaf, Three Flower Grass and a Water Type Monster Core.”

“This is a bauble, which I had successfully researched in the past, when I had nothing better to do. It can protect your throat. After you consume this, you need not be concerned with that time limit of the Sonic Dou Technique. As long as your spirit can endure it, it is up to you how long you want to roar. Your throat will not become mute.” Yao Lao smilingly said.

Xiao Yan’s eyes brightened when he heard this. He nodded his head excitedly. If an ordinary person were to practice a Sonic Dou Technique, he could only practice for a maximum of three hours a day. However, if he were to consume this so called ‘Ice Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’, he would be able to continue to train for a couple of days without stopping. It was said that hard work could make up for one’s clumsiness. Xiao Yan believed that he would be able to grasp the essence of the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ if he went all out and trained hard during these two days. Moreover, Xiao Yan was not clumsy!

This so called ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’ basically could not even be considered a medicinal pill. Although one must pay extreme attention to some of its refining details, refining it went very smoothly for Xiao Yan, who had an unusually strong Spiritual Perception. Therefore, after he took out the medicinal ingredients, which he had already prepared, he began to raise his hand and refined it. Nearly half an hour later, the medicinal ingredients, that were placed in front of him, had

already turned into pale-blue liquid and easily filled two small, jade bottles.

“Ah, not bad. Your ability to control flames has improved very quickly. Looks like the effect of having an outstanding Spiritual Perception is quite great.” Yao Lao nodded his head and exclaimed a little as he eyed the small jade bottles in Xiao Yan’s hand. Although it was not difficult to refine this so called ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’, being able to maintain a success rate of seventy percent on Xiao Yan’s first attempt at refining it could indeed be considered an extremely outstanding result.

“Swallow one mouthful every hour. After that, you can practice the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ recklessly. If you are lucky, you might be able to grasp some initial control over it during the remaining time that you have.” Yao Lao smilingly said: “As for that ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’, you should temporarily steer clear of it. One reason is that there is not enough time. The second is that practicing Di class Dou Techniques is not as easy as you think. Therefore, we can only wait until after you enter the inner academy before I can find some opportunity to help you design a training procedure.”

“Yes.”

Xiao Yan nodded. He first kept one small jade bottle before pouring a mouthful of liquid from the other bottle into his mouth. The moment the ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’ rolled down his throat, it turned into an icy cool feeling that began spreading out. Xiao Yan was able to clearly feel that these icy cool liquid were covering the spot where his throat was. The remnant searing pain, that had been present earlier, swiftly disappeared at this moment.

“Hei, it is indeed a good thing... now, let us strive to grasp the initial control over this ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ during the remaining time.”

As he sensed the searing pain disappear, Xiao Yan could not help but feel a little strange at the swift effect of this liquid. He parted his mouth and smiled. Immediately, he inhaled a long breath of somewhat moist air

before that strange roaring sound once again roared out from Xiao Yan's mouth a moment later. Finally, it turned into a circular-shaped ripple which spread out in all directions with Xiao Yan at the center. It formed waves of ripples across the surface of the lake.

Under the waterfall, the strange roaring, which was covered by the loud splashing of the waterwall, was becoming increasingly sharp and pressurized.

Chapter 434: Tiger Roar Shaking The Mountain Forest

The gentle breeze blew over the endless sea of trees causing the branches to sway. The sea of trees were scattered with bursts of green-colored waves that spread out towards the edge of one's sight.

Within the sea of trees, there would occasionally be a silver, river-like waterfall present as ornaments. It carried a loud bang as well as a fog rose up and permeated the sky. Under the waterfall, the fog was spread over the surface of the lake, appearing hazy as though one was in the territory of the immortals.

There, a black-robed young man was seated cross-legged on a huge rock on the edge of the lake. His hands formed the training seal and the air around his body fluctuated slightly. Threads of faint energy surfaced and unceasingly poured into the young man's body.

The clean and transparent lake, where one could see the bottom, contained the rumbling sound of the waterfall, and a dense fog filled the air. It was an artistic scene formed from its special environment. Under this environment, the energy, which swarmed out from the air surrounding the black-robed young man, was also becoming increasingly dense. The young man did not refuse the energy that came to him. His body was like a black hole which could not be filled, swallowing all that came near him and refining them.

After training for an hour, the energy surrounding Xiao Yan finally began to gradually become faint. His eyelashes moved a little before he slowly opened his eyes. A clear glint shone in his dark, black eyes and disappeared swiftly.

"This place is not a bad place to use for training. In just two short days, the Dou Qi in my body has been enhanced by quite a lot. According to this training speed, I might be able to advance to a seven star Da Dou Shi if I was to train here for two months." Xiao Yan undid the seal formed by his hand and sensed the surging and flowing Dou Qi in his body as he

whispered in a somewhat surprised voice.

“Unfortunately, after two days of tough training, I still have not learned the trick to the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ despite having the help of the ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’. Although I am now able to barely emit a sound wave, its attacking strength is too weak. It basically cannot be used to face an opponent.” Xiao Yan slowly stood up, flipped his hand, and placed it on the huge rock. He eyed the calm surface of the lake and sighed with a bitter smile.

After sighing gently, Xiao Yan shook his head. He threw aside the helplessness in his heart as his gaze stopped on the calm surface of the lake, where no ripples were formed. A long while later, he slowly closed his eyes and raised his head slightly. His Spiritual Perception broke out of his body and quietly spread out. Finally, it covered the entire surface of the lake.

Being wrapped by the Spiritual Perception, the quiet atmosphere that the small lake carried was instantly amplified by many dozens of times. Under the influence of this quiet atmosphere, Xiao Yan’s originally somewhat impetuous heart also gradually recovered its calmness.

The black-robed young man placed his hands behind him on the huge rock as he stood up. His body was as straight as a pen, much like a long spear releasing a sharp cold aura, its vigor threatening others.

Xiao Yan did not know how long he stood like this. That roaring sound of the waterfall crashing downwards suddenly gradually became more faint in his ears. At this moment, the entire world in Xiao Yan’s ears seemed to have descended into a somewhat short and bizarre temporary silence.

The current him appeared to have borrowed the silent atmosphere of the lake’s surface to unknowingly enter a mysterious state.

Xiao Yan was in a condition where everything was silent. At this moment, one strange roar after another swiftly flashed through his mind involuntarily. These roars were emitted by Xiao Yan during his training of the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ over the past two days. Under

normal circumstances, he would not have realized the weirdness in his roar. However, during the recollection in his mind at that moment, he was like a machine that was extremely precise and accurate, identifying the tiny soundwaves from those roars.

Countless number of roars sounded at the same time. One by one, the disagreement between each wierd sound wave was identified. After which, it was excluded. The roar, which was originally in disarray, began to faintly have the tendency of being synchronized. The quantity of roars also began to be reduced from the countless number, no... it could not be said to have been reduced. Instead, they had begun to merge together until they had become synchronized, turning into one single sound.

The disarray in the roaring within his mind had become less and less under Xiao Yan's nearly accustomed manner of identifying and eliminating. It also became increasingly louder and more clear.

Under this strange condition, Xiao Yan did not have any concept of time. The only thing he could do in this kind of perplexing condition was to rely on his instinct to analyze the fluctuations of these roaring sounds until it achieved its final perfect form.

Xiao Yan did not know how many hours the never-ending analysis continued for. However, he was slow to exit from that condition. This was because after the countless number of roaring perfectly merged into a single sound, there was no longer any progress. Although Xiao Yan also knew that the roaring sound at this moment could already be considered to have reached the initial stage of the 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar', he kept having the feeling that the roar seemed to be missing something...

What is it missing? The thought in Xiao Yan's mind circulated in a lightning like manner. However, he ultimately had difficulty searching for the thing he needed.

"Roar!"

Xiao Yan's bitter pondering continued for an unknowingly long period of time. However, the instant before Xiao Yan had a premonition that this mysterious condition was about to disappear, a shocking roar, that shook

the entire mountain forest, suddenly sounded from the mountain range in the outside world. The tiger roar followed the sea of trees and began to spread. Finally, it came mightily to the lake. The suppression that was contained in the tiger roar caused some wild beasts around the lake to completely become paralyzed.

The clear and loud tiger roar was not isolated from that condition Xiao Yan was in. Therefore, that roar, which contain the might of the tiger, was transmitted directly into Xiao Yan's ears.

As the tiger roar entered his ears, the roaring sound in Xiao Yan's mind, that had just undergone countless number of analysis in order to merge into one, suddenly fluctuated. At this moment, Xiao Yan heart suddenly brightened. What his own roar was lacking was this kind of true tiger's might. Compared with a true tiger's roar, his own roar merely had the shape!

Within that incomparably clear mind of his, the tiger roar, which had entered his ear earlier, was actually put together and formed a winding substance-like silver-colored wave with extreme curvature. Under Xiao Yan's control, this thread of waves began to merge with the most perfect roar of his, which he had analyzed earlier.

The two sound waves entwined with one another and successfully merged perfectly without too much resistance.

The moment the two sound waves merged, the mysterious condition Xiao Yan was in broke apart abruptly. He suddenly opened his eyes and a clear glint flashed through them explosively. He inhaled a deep breath of air and the Dou Qi flowed wildly within his body. A thread of dragon aura, which he had inherited from the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill', swiftly surged out, and finally directly charged into his throat.

"Roar!"

Xiao Yan's mouth filled slightly. His face was a little flushed as his hands suddenly formed a seal. His mouth widened. At that moment, a thunderclap-like loud tiger roar came explosively out of his mouth.

The shapeless sound wave had just exited his mouth when the air in

front of Xiao Yan began to fluctuate intensely. Immediately, the sound wave began expanding outwards in a lightning-like manner. He could only hear a loud bang. The calm lake surface appeared to have a bomb placed within it. A huge wave, that was seventy to eighty feet high, exploded and rose before falling with a bang. Splashes and fog covered the entire small valley in a thick mist.

The sound of tiger roar was like angry lightning formed from densely placed storm clouds. It rolled and swept out with Xiao Yan as the center. Even the loud sound of the waterfall crashing downwards was covered by the tiger roar. One could even vaguely hear it five kilometers away. Anywhere the sound waves passed, hundreds of beasts felt weak. Even the spirit of some of the strong and powerful Magical Beasts quivered intensely due to the dragon aura that the tiger roar contained. Some of the weaker low rank Magical Beasts, who were also in close proximity from the lake, were actually directly shocked to death by this angry thunder-like sound wave.

Just one roar from Xiao Yan was actually this terrifying!

The roaring sound slowly became weaker a long while later. The fog that had permeated the small mountain valley also gradually disappeared. On the huge rock, the black-robed young man's face was filled with excitement and shock as he eyed the messy ground all around him. He coughed intensely before muttered with great joy: "I have succeeded? This is the strength of the 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar'? It is indeed very strong!"

"You really are a boy blessed by the heavens. To actually be able to grasp the rhythm of the tiger roar within a short two days. Without undergoing half a year's of tough training, normal people would definitely not be able to achieve this. Although you have borrowed the strength from entering that quiet condition in order to merge the tiger's roar and use it for your own purpose, this speed and achievement really is extremely amazing." Yao Lao's voice suddenly sounded in Xiao Yan's heart. When he saw the latter experiencing that strange situation earlier, even he could not help but feel amazed.

Xiao Yan laughed when he heard this. He did not expect that by stumbling around, he would actually be able to enter into such a condition.

“However, you should not be too happy. For now, you have merely grasped the initial stages of the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ and can barely display thirty to forty percent of its strength. Without some time to hone it, it will not be possible for you to reach complete mastery. Moreover, this kind of honing has no shortcuts.” Yao Lao reminded.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded. He twisted his neck and heard the clear cracking sound between his bones before he let out a long breath. Originally, he did not think of reaching complete mastery of the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’. Being able to achieve his current achievement had already far exceeded his expectations. Therefore, he would not be too ambitious.

“It is good that you know this. There is someone coming over, I will withdraw first...” Yao Lao completely disappeared after this without the slightest movement.

Xiao Yan’s hand brushed the water from his clothes. His head turned towards the entrance of the small mountain valley. The tree branches moved slightly at that spot and a green-colored figure immediately flashed out in a lithe manner, much like a butterfly. Finally, she quietly stood on a small rock protruding at the side of the lake. Her silvery bell-like laughter was like the chanting of the mountain bell, causing Xiao Yan’s mind, which had not relaxed for two days and two nights, to quietly ease up.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, the two days of preparation is already up. Today, we are entering the Inner Academy. Are you prepared?” The green-clothed young lady raised her elegant and exquisite pretty face. She said smilingly with a gentle voice as she eyed the young man, whose body appeared even taller while standing on a huge rock with his arms behind his back.

Xiao Yan nodded his head with a smile. He patted the large Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back. His toes pressed against the rock surface and his body turned into a black shadow that flashed and appeared at the exit of the

mountain valley. After waving his hands at Xun Er, he immediately turned around and slowly walked out of the small mountain valley.

“Inner Academy huh? I anticipate it greatly... hopefully it won't disappoint me.”

The human figure gradually disappeared within the thicket, leaving behind a faint voice that slowly resounded in this place.

Chapter 435: The Location of The Inner Academy

When Xiao Yan and Xun Er arrived at the deputy headmaster, Hu Gan's, study, they saw that there were already quite a number of people standing on the empty ground in front of them. These people were divided into quite a number of large and small groups. Each of them softly conversed with a smile. Amongst these groups, the three groups consisting of Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia respectively, were the largest.

Xiao Yan's and Xun Er's appearance also caused the noisy, open ground to become slightly quieter. Other than a small number of people, most of the gazes that were used to look at the two of them were filled with respect. In the Qualifying Competition a few days ago, Xiao Yan used a tyrannical battle style of one against three to shock and deter all the dissatisfied voices. Therefore, his reputation had already faintly surpassed Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and the others despite having only arrived at the academy less than a month ago.

Xiao Yan and Xun Er directly passed through the human crowd and arrived at an empty spot near the front. They exchanged glances with Bai Shan and the two others. With the exception of Bai Shan, Hu Jia and Wu Hao nodded towards them. Their attitudes were clearly much better than before. Clearly, the words that Hu Gan had told them two days before were not totally ignored. When they were just entering the Inner Academy, a place where strong people were as numerous as the clouds, it was likely that they would suffer a little if they were not a little more united. Although the two of them were haughty they were not stupid. It would naturally be best if they did not need to endure pointless suffering.

At this moment, the open ground was also surrounded and filled with quite a number of other students. In the hearts of all the students in the outer academy, being able to enter the Inner Academy to train was an honor that caused many people to be extremely envious of. Countless number of people had been working hard towards this direction from the

moment they entered the academy. Therefore, each year, when the students who had passed through the Qualifying Competition were entering the Inner Academy, there would be many people who would come to see them off, or simply to watch them.

Ten minutes after Xiao Yan had arrived at this place, the tightly shut door of the study was opened. Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan and a few old men slowly walked out. When the people on the open ground saw them arrive, the private whispers on the open ground gradually became quiet. A moment later, it was completely silent.

Hu Gan's gaze slowly swept across the fifty students on the open ground. When he saw that there was no one missing, he nodded with satisfaction. With a step forward, he clearly said: "Students, today is the day that you will all be entering the Inner Academy. I will congratulate all of you here. Your hard training had finally finally reaped rewards. I believe that after entering the Inner Academy, all of you might not suit the training method in there; however, there is one point that I am very certain. That is, in there, you will be able to activate your own potential to the greatest extent there, ke ke, I am not exaggerating, you only need to stay in the Inner Academy for one year and you will be totally transformed... There may be people amongst you who know some students in the Inner Academy. After all, they would occasionally have some leave to come out of the Inner Academy. Therefore, you should all be clear just how large a gap there is between the strength when students come out and when they first entered."

When they heard Hu Gan's words, there were a few students on the open ground who nodded slightly. Clearly, they should have some interactions with those students who had come out from the Inner Academy. The majority, however, had faces filled with anticipation and excitement. What Hu Gan had said was what they were pursuing. Was it not their aim to pursue an even greater strength when they fought to enter into the inner academy? They believed that regardless of how strange or tough the training method of the Inner Academy was, they would endure it all the way!

Being able to stand out within Jia Nan Academy proved their talent and hard work. The people who were able to stand up here were not those who thought that strength would just come without any effort.

“The Inner Academy is the core of Jia Nan Academy. Due to the need to keep its location secret, most of the students in the Outer Academy, as well as the instructors, are unaware of its exact location. Therefore, we will send you to a certain place.” Hu Gan smiled. He raised his head and eyed the distant, blue sky. At that spot, ten black shadows were flying over. A moment later, the black shadows gradually became bigger. They were surprisingly ten enormous Griffins.

The ten Griffins carried their enormous dark shadows as they swept past the academy. Finally, they stopped in the air above Xiao Yan and the other students. They flapped their wings and wild wind shot everywhere, fanning the students below until some of them began to sway.

“Griffins? Don’t tell me that the Inner Academy is very far from here?” A glint of surprise flashed past Xiao Yan’s eyes as he looked at the Griffins hovering above.

Hu Gan waved his hands towards the Griffins in the sky. Immediately, the dark shadows began to press towards the ground. Finally, the ten Griffins landed in an empty spot not too far away after a wild wind brushed past. Everyone’s gazes scanned them, only to find that there were two people on the back of each of the Griffins, driving them.

“Alright. Time’s up. All students, please get on. Five people to a group.” Hu Gan pointed at the Griffins and smilingly said after seeing that they had landed.

When they heard Hu Gan’s words, the students on the open ground immediately turned around. They were like a swarm of beasts as they rushed onto the open ground, after which they appeared to be like fleas as these impatient fellows climbed onto the large backs of each of the Griffins, hearing ‘suo suo’ sounds as they did so. However, when their feet stepped onto the backs of the Griffins, the slightly slippery feathers caused them to suffer. Some of the people, whose feet were not stable,

directly slid and fell down. Their bodies smashed into the rocky ground, causing banging sounds to appear repeatedly.

“Ha ha, young fellows, don’t try to be brave. There are seats placed on the Griffins. Don’t be delusional and try to stand on its back. That is something that only those with the strength of a Da Dou Shi can do.” Hu Gan laughed loudly. He immediately turned his head towards Xiao Yan and the others and said: “The top five. You five will be one group. Climb on up.”

“Uh?” Xiao Yan and the four others were startled when they heard this. He did not expect that Hu Gan would actually arrange for the five of them to be together in a group. They hesitated for a moment. Other than Bai Shan, who knit his brows together, the others nodded indifferently.

“Let’s go.” Xiao Yan spoke to Xun Er. His body flashed and immediately appeared on the back of a Griffin. His feet steadily stood on its slippery feather without moving even a little, as though he was a metal pagoda. When the students, who had fallen from the Griffins earlier, saw his steady movements, they could not resist having their faces fill up with admiration. Having tried to forcefully get onto the Griffin, they clearly knew just how difficult it was for someone to stand on those damn feathers.

Behind Xiao Yan, Xun Er and the others also flashed onto the Griffin at the same time. The four of them also did not borrow the help of anything as they immediately stood straight and tall on the back of their Griffin. This strength was indeed worthy of being the top five rankings of the Qualifying Competition.

After seeing the performance of these five people, Hu Gan and the other old people beside him took one look around the empty ground. When they saw that everyone had boarded their Griffins, they exchanged glances with each other and nodded. Hu Gan waved his hand. He and three other elderly men moved and flashed into midair. Their shoulders shook and four pairs of beautiful Dou Qi wings extended out. Each pair of Dou Qi wings were flapped, and their bodies were suspended in mid air without moving in front of numerous, envious gazes from below.

Being able to coagulate and form a pair of Dou Qi wings and fly freely had always been the dream of many who cultivated.

“We will personally escort you all the way there.” Hu Gan looked down at the open ground from high above in the sky and smiled. He waved his hand and the people, who drove the Griffins, let out a sharp whistle. Immediately, the Griffins suddenly flapped their wings and their huge bodies slowly rose into the air, accompanied by the increasingly shrinking shadows, they rose up off the ground.

“Xiao Yan, Xun Er, We wish you all the best! If your performance in the Inner Academy is outstanding, you will receive time off.” A voice suddenly sounded from below as the Griffins were rising into the air. Xiao Yan and Xun Er lowered their head to take a look. It was actually Instructor Ruo Ling. At this moment, Xiao Yu, Xiao Ning, and Xiao Mei had lifted their heads to watch the group of Griffins, which were ascending higher and higher. They waved towards Xiao Yan when they saw him looking over.

As the Griffin’s wings swiftly flapped, the human figures below became smaller and smaller. In the end, they were nearly the size of ants. Looking down at the entire Jia Nan Academy from this high up in the sky, one could see every location in their line of sight.

Ten large Griffins were flapping their wings in the blue sky, flying in the direction of the endless stretch of mountains behind the academy. Ahead of the Griffins flew Hu Gan and the three elderly men. They formed a four-sided shape that surrounded the entire Griffin formation within. Powerful Dou Qi surfaced outside their bodies. No matter how the wild the wind raged, it did not even touch their bodies.

“The Inner Academy is indeed not within the Jia Nan Academy. Don’t tell me it is located within the boundless mountains behind the academy?” Xiao Yan softly muttered as eyeing the Jia Nan Academy as it disappeared from his line of sight.

“It is rumored that the location of the Inner Academy is a great secret. Even some of the students, who have come out from the Inner Academy, would not be able to find the location of the Inner Academy if they did not

have the Griffins trained for the purpose of taxing them in and out.” Xun Er smilingly said. A faint, golden glow seeped out from her body, completely blocking the wild wind that was blowing at her from the front.

“Do you all know what’s so special about the Inner Academy?” Xiao Yan turned his gazes towards Hu Jia and the other two, taking the lead to break the stiff atmosphere. Since the Deputy Headmaster requested them to be on the same Griffin, that meant that they were already a group. Since this was the case, it was a must to release the tension in the relationship between them no matter how little.

“Grandfather has never mentioned anything about the Inner Academy to me, so I am also uncertain. However, each time we see the students come out from the Inner Academy, their strength have all risen sharply compared to when they previously entered.” Hu Jia glanced at Xiao Yan. She similarly knew Xiao Yan’s intentions. She finally opened her mouth to reply after recalling Hu Gan repeatedly reminding her not to strain their relationship.

“I also don’t know. I very seldom bother about these things.” Wu Hao also shook his head. As a battle-crazy person, he had spent most of his time in the past pursuing and killing the people of the ‘Black-Corner Region’ who had strayed into Jia Ma Academy’s boundaries. Where would he find time to bother about the Inner Academy?

“Won’t we naturally know when we get there?” Bai Shan said faintly. Although he knew a little, he was unwilling to share this information with Xiao Yan. He earnestly wished for the other party to suffer a little more.

Xiao Yan looked at Bai Shan, who had his arms crossed in front of his chest, deeply. However, he did not continue to ask anything else. The guard he felt towards this fellow within his heart had become much more dense.

Xiao Yan shifted his gaze away from Bai Shan. He gazed at the lush, green ocean of trees beneath them, which were swiftly rushing past. He exhaled a long breath in his heart. The Inner Academy... was the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ really at this place?

Chapter 436: Fire Energy Hunting Competition

The vast sea of trees held various different kinds of Magical Beasts within it. Every once in awhile, there would be ferocious auras of Magical Beasts shooting out from within the sea of trees in an explosive manner. However, when these Magical Beasts entered within a hundred meter radius of the group, they would be shocked by the powerful force emitted from the barrier that Hu Gan's and the three elders created until they warily retreated.

Of course, this was not the case for every one of them. As the Magical Beasts were widespread in such a concentrated manner within the vast endless mountains, there was naturally no shortage of frighteningly powerful creatures. Half an hour after the flying formation began travelling within the mountains behind the academy, there were some powerful Magical Beasts who forcefully charged and attacked the Griffin formation, in spite of the pressure being released by Hu Gan and the other three people. At this time, Hu Gan and the other three old men began to display their shocking strength. Each time they waved their hands, powerful blasts of energy shot across the sky like a thunderbolt. Immediately, Xiao Yan and the others would hear a muffled sound, and the large-sized Magical Beasts suddenly exploded into fresh blood and fell down.

As they flew, various kinds of ferocious Magical Beasts swarmed over, pouncing from the rear and front. However, there wasn't a single Magical Beast who could break through the blockade that was Hu Gan and the three others.

Xiao Yan and the others stood on the Griffins. Their faces were stunned as they watched the Magical Beasts' bodies being shredded to bits. From their Qis, most of these Magical Beasts appeared to possess the strength to contend with any one of the students present. Even if that was the case, they were still turned into a mist of blood each time Hu Gan and the

others waved their hand. This kind of strength really caused people to turn green with envy.

“No wonder they need to escort us all the way there. It is really unexpected that there are so many dangers lurking in the mountains behind the academy. If we were to travel by foot through the forest, it is likely that given the strength of the other students, there would hardly be anyone who would be able to walk out alive.” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly as he eyed another cloud of blood form from an explosion fifty meters away from their location. Earlier, when the group flew past the vast mountain range, he could clearly sense that there were at least rank 5 or Dou Wang class Magical Beast auras existing in the dense forest below using his outstandingly large Spiritual Perception. However, the Magical Beasts, which had reached such a rank had already gained intelligence which was not inferior to that of a human's. Therefore, they could naturally sense the strength of Hu Gan and the others. Hence, they did not act like the weaker Magical Beast, attacking the Griffin formation recklessly. It was also fortunate that these high ranked Magical Beast knew what fear was. Otherwise, even with Hu Gan and the three other Dou Huang level experts escorting them, it was likely impossible that this Griffin formation of theirs would arrive at their destination unscathed.

Bloody mist accompanied them all the way as they continued to fly. Hu Gan and the three others were like sharp cones that tore out a path within the Magical Beast that came attacking in all directions. The strength of a Dou Huang was strong to such an extent.

This nearly peremptory charging continued for almost an hour before the flying speed of the Griffin formation finally slowed down. When he sensed the reduction in speed, Xiao Yan swept his gaze in front of him. However, he was uncertain when he discovered that, other than a bottomless gorge under their feet, the other places were still an endless green carpet where they could not see the edges. Forget about the Inner Academy, there wasn't even a single human figure.

“What is happening?” Xiao Yan exchanged looks with Xun Er and the rest. All of their faces were filled with doubt and confusion.

“Descend!”

The sharpness in Hu Gan’s eyes gradually disappeared. The powerful force, that soared from within his body earlier, was quietly retracted back into his body. He smilingly waved his hand, and the ten Griffins flapped their wings as they slowly descended towards the mountain gorge below.

The Griffins carried a dark shadow and wild gusts of wind as they landed smoothly on the ground. Xiao Yan and the others saw the waving gestures that Hu Gan showed them. They exchanged glances before leaping down from the Griffins and began to land and gather on the empty ground. Their gazes looked all around them while their faces were at a loss.

“Where is this place? Don’t tell me that the Inner Academy is here?” After they landed on the ground, Hu Jia was the first to be unable to bear it and questioned Hu Gan. When the others heard this question, they turned also their gazes towards Hu Gan. Clearly, they also wanted to know the answer to it.

“It is not so easy to enter the Inner Academy.” Hu Gan smiled faintly. Immediately, he slowly took ten steps forward under everyone’s gaze. After which, his footsteps paused. With a wave of his hand, a wave of energy shot out explosively and arrived at the space in front of him. A strange scene surfaced almost instantly. They saw that when the energy shot past a certain empty area, it actually created a wave-like ripple. This ripple swiftly fluctuated. Finally, a large pale, silver-colored door, that was over seventy to eighty feet high appeared out of nowhere.

Xiao Yan and the others were shocked when they eyed the large, silver-colored door that had appeared out of nowhere. Clearly, they did not think that this seemingly ordinary place would actually hide such a profound secret.

The silver-colored door carried a clear sound as it slowly opened in front of everyone’s eyes. The scene behind the door was also a thick forest, as it has always been. It appeared that this forest in front of them was no different than what they had seen earlier.

“Follow me.” Hu Gan waved his hand and took the lead to walk through

the large silver-colored door. Behind him, tens of students followed closely while wearing expressions that were filled with curiosity.

Xiao Yan did not walk near the front. He stood in the back and eyed the people who entered the silver-colored door in front of him. After which, his gaze was once again thrown onto the space outside of the large door. He was somewhat stunned to discover that those people who had entered the silver-colored door seemed to have entered another space and just disappeared into thin air.

“What a strange place...” This scene caused Xiao Yan to exclaim and shook his head. He recalled the spatial folds in front of the ‘Book Collection Hall’ and came to a sudden understanding. The tactics of super elites were indeed something that they had difficulty understanding at their current level of strength.

After Xiao Yan exclaimed in his heart, he lengthened his stride and followed the group. After which, he past through the large silver-colored door. Following which, he also disappeared.

The large door only slowly shut itself tightly after everyone, including the ten Griffins, had entered through them. Finally, a silver-colored energy ripple spread out, and the large silver-colored door gradually dissipated until it completely disappeared. At this moment, this entire region had changed into an extremely ordinary forest.

As Xiao Yan stepped across the large silver-colored door, he suddenly felt his mind go blank. His two feet were pressed firmly on the solid ground as his gaze swept across the place in front of him. However, he was a little surprised to discover that the scene in front of them was similar to the forest earlier. It was just that... at this moment, two old men and a few middle-aged men had actually unknowingly appeared near the forest. Additionally, there were over twenty young people standing behind them. Xiao Yan’s gaze swept over their bodies and discovered that they were all wearing badges on their chest, which had drawing similar to a tower.

“Ke ke, Old Hu, you are punctual as always. We can always rest assured

when we let you escort the new students. How are the new students this year?" At this moment, one of the two old men smiled at the leading Hu Gan and said when he saw the large group of people entering.

"Not bad. It is definitely a little better than last year's group." Hu Gan smiled and said: "It is really unexpected that it is your turn to carry out the duty this year. Looks like it's going to be quite tiring."

"There's no choice." The two old men helplessly shook their heads.

"The five of you come over." Hu Gan turned his body and beckoned Xiao Yan and the four others with his hand. When he saw that the five had arrived by his side, he pointed towards the two old men and said: "These two are Elders in the Inner Academy. This is Elder Su, and this other person is Elder Qing. If you have any problem in the Inner Academy in the future, you can look for them. Ke ke, these five little fellows were the top five ranked in this year's Qualifying Competition. Their strength is not bad." These final two sentences were naturally spoken to Elder Su and Elder Qing.

"Oh?" The gazes of the two Elders carried a bizarreness as they swept across the five of them. Finally, they nodded and said: "Being able to obtain the top five at this age. Their potential is indeed much better than the last batch."

"Yo, what beautiful girls. Looks like there will be two more names on the 'Beauty Ranking' within the Inner Academy." After Xiao Yan and the four others came out, the eyes of the few young people standing behind those middle-aged fellows immediately brightened as they whistled and said.

"Shut your mouth. Whoever says any more nonsense will have their tower training time cut by five days!" Elder Su turned around and chided. The young men behind smiled mischievously as they immediately shut their mouths. Clearly, the deduction of the so-called tower training time caused them to be extremely afraid.

After rebuking that group of young people until they did not dare to say anything more, Elder Su turned around. He faced Xiao Yan and the other new students as he slowly spoke: "You're all new here, so I hope that you

can all get used to this place. That way, you will all obtain the greatest benefit possible. Look at these bastards. In previous years, they may have passed through the Qualifying Competition in the Outer Academy but they are merely ranked at the bottom. However, in merely one year's time, I dare say that with their strength, they would definitely be able to enter the top ten amongst all of you."

Xiao Yan was slightly startled when he heard this. His gaze was thrown towards those young people and his gaze solidified slightly. He could sense that these young people were indeed very strong. Amongst this group of new students, it might well be possible to count the number of people who could defeat them with just both hands. Yet these people were merely those ranked at the bottom in the Qualifying Competition of previous years. From this, one could see just how the strength of these people advanced by leaps and bounds after entering the Inner Academy.

"Alright, let's not say any more nonsense. Although you all have already passed through the Qualifying Competition and obtained the right to enter the Inner Academy, it is still not over..." Elder Su smiled. He waved his hand and a large pile of black-colored crystal sheets appeared in his hand. With a random toss using his hand, he threw the crystal sheets. Immediately, the crystal sheets appeared to have grown eyes as they began to suspend themselves in front of everyone. Xiao Yan and the others were startled as they extended their hands and held them.

Once the crystal sheets entered their hands, Xiao Yan and the others immediately sensed a strange heat energy seeping out from within it. They lowered their heads to observe for a moment and discovered that it was a transparent screen of crystal. Imprinted on the screen was a large red-colored number: "5!"

"What does this mean?" Xiao Yan was somewhat doubtful as he eyed that red-colored number. He lifted his gaze and was somewhat stunned when he saw that the group of young people standing behind the middle-aged men were eyeing the dark, black crystal sheets that was held in his and the others hands with heated gazes. There was a desire within their gazes that they did not hide.

“Due to some things, it is quite difficult explaining it. You will naturally understand it in the future. However, there is only one thing which you need to know for now. Protect the crystal sheets in your hands as though it is your life. Once you enter the Inner Academy, you will understand its importance! Of course, just take a look at the expression in the eyes of this group of people and you will understand this point.” Towards the end of his speech, Elder Su pointed at the group of young people behind and smilingly said.

Xiao Yan and Xun Er exchanged glances and nodded their heads. The crystal sheets in their hands shook and were stored into their storage ring.

“Next, you will all need to enter this forest. After which, you must successfully reach the Inner Academy at the edge of the forest.” Elder Su’s finger stopped at the group of young people and said faintly: “You will need to be careful of them when all of you are passing through this forest... According to the rules of the academy, they are able to randomly fight within this forest. In other words, they can attack any of you.”

“Remember, the number on the top of the crystal sheets in your hands is an extremely great temptation to them. Therefore, with the exception of killing people, they will use all sorts of methods to obtain the... ‘Fire Energy’ on your crystal sheets... you will feel that this term is extremely familiar and very lovely in the future... For now, you need to avoid them or defeat them. As long as you are not captured by them and successfully arrive at the academy, you will have your final reward. The earlier you arrive, the richer the reward.”

Elder Su’s finger suddenly turned towards the dark, black forest behind him. “With regards to this seizing in the forest, our Inner Academy calls it the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’.”

“Now, I announce that this year’s ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ has formally begin! Students, begin to flee!”

Chapter 437: Snatching

Sporadic sunlight shown between the gaps in the tree cover.

“Hey, the few of you actually have the leisure to argue at a time like this?” A faint, mocking voice suddenly sounded between the trees.

The five people, who were walking, suddenly stiffened. They hurriedly raised their heads only to see that five young people descended upon them and stood on tree branches above their heads in an orderly fashion. They each wore a badge, which had the appearance of a tower on it, on their chest. At this moment, the five young men were eyeing the five people below with faces filled with ridicule. That expression was like a cat who had seen a mouse.

“You’re all here to snatch the so-called ‘Fire Energy’ from us, right?” A tall and large young man amongst the five people said with a cold smile. For him to be able to rank amongst the top fifty in the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy, his strength was naturally not low. He was not too afraid of these young people, who were of similar ages to him.

“Smart.” A young man on the tree branch, who had a snake-like scar on his face, let out a clear snap with his fingers. He immediately smilingly said: “Since you know why we are here, then there is no need to say any more nonsense. Hand over the ‘Fire Energy’ and you’ll avoid your suffering. What do you say?”

“In your dreams?” A skinny, weak-looking man smacked his lips. However, his voice had just sounded when the human figure in front of him flashed. Immediately, a human figure appeared in front of them. A gentle breeze tore through the air suddenly sounded out. After which, a leg heavily stepped on the stomach of the skinny and weak-looking young man in a lightning-like manner. Immediately, the latter’s body shot backwards and smashed into a tree trunk. A mouthful of fresh blood was spat out. He struggled a little, but still failed to successfully climb to his feet.

“Attack!” Seeing that their companion had been beaten, that tall and large young man became furious. He cried out angrily, desiring to fight.

However, his voice had just sounded when he heard a muffled sound behind him. He hurriedly spun around to see what had happened, only to see that his other three companions were already kicked around like a rolling gourd. Beside them were three young men with their hands crossed over their chests. Their face was filled with disdain.

“Brother, remember, no matter how well you might have muddled along in the Other Academy in the past, when you enter the Inner Academy, you will coil if you are a dragon and you will lie down if you are a tiger. These are the lessons that we, your seniors, have learned after undergoing countless amounts of physical pain. Today, I will teach you this lesson for free.” A laugh suddenly sounded by the ear of the tall and large young man. A shadow immediately flashed over. A fist, the size of a casserole, violently smashed into his face. Immediately, that young man fell onto the ground. His mouth was filled with fresh blood.

“If you don’t want to continue being beaten, hand over your Fire Crystal Cards.” The young man with the snake-shaped scar twisted his fist and said faintly.

When they heard his words, the expressions of the five new students changed slightly. A moment later, however, they could only clench their teeth and thought in their hearts that a wise man knew better than to fight when the odds were against him before taking out the so-called Fire Crystal Cards.

A heat flashed across that young man’s face as he received the cards from the hands of the five beaten students. He hugged the cards and gave them a ferocious kiss. After which, he waved his hand and threw the remaining four cards to his four companions. He flipped his hand and a pale, blue-colored card appeared in his hand. If one looked at it carefully, there was actually a fiery red number 47 on the screen of this pale-blue card.

The scarred young man held the dark, black card with one hand and the pale-blue card with the other. After which, he brought them close together and rubbed it with all his might. Immediately, a light flashed from the two cards. A moment later, the light was extinguished. However, the number

on that pale-blue card had become 50 at this moment. On the other hand, the number on that dark black card had turned from a 5 into a 2.

“Chi, what stupid rules. We must leave two days of ‘Fire Energy’ for the new students. How wasteful.” That scarred face young man curled his lips and said with great dissatisfaction when he saw the number remaining on the black card.

“Let’s go, Lin Ge. We need to maximize the time to continue to look for other groups. We have finally managed to obtain the qualification to participate in the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ with great difficulty. If we cannot obtain six days worth of ‘Fire Energy’, we will have made a big loss.” Another young man kept the Fire Crystal Card properly and threw the dark Crystal Card back to the unfortunate new students before turning towards the scar-faced young man and said.

“Ah, let’s go.” The young man, who was called Lin Ge, nodded his head. He said smilingly towards the five new students on the ground: “Pitiful little fellows. This is the result of not knowing how to work as a team. You should remember this in the future. After that, you can be like us next year, coming to snatch the ‘Fire Energy’ of new, naive students. Don’t hold it against us. This is because, because this is the path that every new student who enters the Inner Academy must undergo. Ha ha, let’s go.”

With a loud laugh, Lin Ge waved his hands and the five of them flashed onto the tree branches. After which they chased in the direction that led deeper into the forest, leaving behind five crestfallen and green-faced new students.

As that group of older students left, the few new students could only climb to their feet with a gloomy face after being dispirited for a while. Each of them exchanged ferocious gazes with one another and actually spread out, each taking their own path.

Five people were hiding within the dense thicket tens of meters from this empty ground. The direction which their gazes were looking towards was the direction in which the five new students had left. Obviously, they had clearly seen the misfortune that the five new students had

encountered with their own eyes.

“Looks like the ‘Fire Energy’ in these Crystal Cards seems to serve an extremely important purpose within the Inner Academy. Otherwise, those fellows would definitely not rush like a flock.” Xiao Yan slowly withdrew his gaze, and eyed the dark Crystal Card, as well as the large number 5 on it while speaking.

“Yes.” Xun Er and the others nodded slightly. The target that those fellows were snatching from was extremely clear. It was merely just the ‘Fire Energy’ on the Crystal Cards.

“Let’s go. Those fellows should have also left. In any case, let’s not dawdle here. Didn’t that Elder Su say that the earlier we arrive, the richer the reward we will receive? Let’s not waste more time.” Bai Shan knitted his eyebrows and urged.

“Wait.” Xiao Yan waved his hand and stopped Bai Shan. The latter frowned a little and said in a cold voice: “What do you want?”

Xiao Yan glanced at him and said in a slow and deliberate manner: “No matter what conflict exists between us, I think that since we are currently a group, we should perhaps know a little of the so-called team spirit. Otherwise, that group of new students earlier will be us.”

Hu Jia and the others nodded. From the way that group of older students had attacked with great understanding and teamwork between one another earlier, it was clear that they were frequently worked together. Their strength was not much weaker than Xiao Yan’s group. If it was a one on one fight, the five of them might perhaps obtain victory. However, if it was a group fight, with the kind of teamwork the other party had just shown, it would not be too difficult for these people to handle Xiao Yan’s group, where each member had his or her own ulterior motive.

“What do you suggest?” Hu Jia’s bright eyes stared at Xiao Yan as she asked with a frown.

“Since we are in a group, we naturally need a leader. In other words, the leader will command and assign. What I suggest is that we must find a leader amongst the five of us. Otherwise, if we were to each fight on our

own, we will be as strong as a pile of loose sand. I'm afraid that it would be very difficult for us to successfully leave this forest with those fellows cutting us off and surrounding us..." Xiao Yan said slowly.

Hu Jia and the few others were startled when they heard this. They immediately hesitated for a moment before all of them nodded. These words Xiao Yan said were true. A group that acted on command would forever be able to display a stronger fighting strength when compared to a group of scattered individuals!

"Then... who is going to be the leader?" Wu Hao, whose entire body was wrapped in a blood-colored robe, was silent for a moment before asking the most knotty question.

Xiao Yan and the others all descended into silence when Wu Hao said these words. A moment later, Xun Er's moved her footsteps and stood by Xiao Yan's side. She used her action to indicate her choice.

Seeing Xun Er's action, the expression of Bai Shan and the others each underwent a different change. A long while later, Hu Jia, who had her eyebrows tightly knit together, could only helplessly shake her head and said: "Alright. On account of Xun Er's face, I will trust you once."

Once she finished saying this, she also walked over to Xiao Yan's side and threw her gaze at the other two.

"Your strength... I submit. I don't have any issues temporarily listening to your commands..." Wu Hao's low voice slowly sounded. Immediately, he also walked towards Xiao Yan.

Bai Shan's expression was a little ugly as he watched the three people standing by Xiao Yan's side. His eyes flashed in an undefined manner.

"Bai Shan, if you are unwilling, then the four of us will leave first." Xiao Yan's gaze stared at Bai Shan and said faintly.

"You..." Bai Shan's expression changed when he heard this. He could only nod with hatred as he strided over to Xiao Yan's and said coldly: "Alright, you are now the leader of our group. However, I will say this first. Don't think of using us to fight at the front. We are not fools that will

allow others to use us like hatchet men.”

“These matters are common matters for our group. I will naturally not ask anyone to go and block the enemy by themselves.” Xiao Yan eyed the four of them. A sharp glint suddenly swarmed into his black eyes as he softly said: “However, now that I have already become the group leader, I hope that before we leave this forest, none of you will do something that would cause us great harm because of you being double-faced towards me. Otherwise, you should not blame me, Xiao Yan. It is not the first time that we have made contact. You should all be clear about my character. The last time, I was able to let all of you lie in the clinic for seven days. This time, I am still able to...”

Hearing Xiao Yan’s words that contained a warning, Hu Jia curled her lips but did not voice any objection, Wu Hao nodded and the corner of Bai Shan’s mouth twitched. It was a long while later before Bai Shan managed to suppress the surge of emotion within his heart.

However, no matter what reaction the three of them had, at the very least, Xiao Yan had currently obtained the power to command this small group in name. Next, they would need to truly break down the walls between them!

Chapter 438: Reverse Snatching

The leaves in the quiet, dense forest suddenly moved a little. A few human figures flashed out from the tree branches. Their bodies were like agile monkeys as they pressed against the tree trunks, and shot forward once again. After a few leaps like this, they swiftly disappeared from the edge of the branches.

“Stop!” As the human figure flashed, the human figure leading the group suddenly raised his hand vertically. The four human shadows behind him immediately landed on the branches in an extremely agile manner. After which, they turned their doubtful gazes towards the black-robed young man.

“What is it?” Hu Jia’s gaze swept around in all directions, but did not discover any movement. She could not help but whisper in a somewhat doubtful manner.

“There is someone coming. Let’s hide first.” Xiao Yan’s gaze stared intently to his left. His extraordinary Spiritual Perception had gifted him with the outstanding ability to survive in the jungles. He was able to sense movement that others were not able to sense, one step ahead of them. On this point, it was basically very difficult for him to be involuntarily attacked in this hunting competition.

With the exception of Xun Er, Hu Jia and the others were a little stunned when they heard Xiao Yan’s words. They did not sense any presences approaching. However, when they eyed Xiao Yan’s expression and recalled his current status as the group leader, the three of them could only nod slightly. Immediately, the five human figures flashed simultaneously and swiftly fled into a dense thicket below.

Around five minutes after Xiao Yan and the others had hidden themselves, there was suddenly a slight sound of rushing wind being transmitted from the dense forest not far away. Immediately, five figures gradually appeared and stopped in the air, a spot not far away from where Xiao Yan and the others were hiding. Their sharp gazes slowly swept

across this stretch of quiet thicket.

The gazes of Xiao Yan and the four others passed through the gaps of the thicket and stared intently at the five older students of the Inner Academy, who stood not far from them. Judging from the Qis that were seeping out from their bodies, it appeared that these people were actually all around the one star Da Dou Shi level or so.

The strength of these people may not be weak but when compared to Xiao Yan's five man group, there was still some gap between them. Adding to this, Xiao Yan and the others were not novices who failed in terms of mentality. Therefore, they would naturally not make any unnecessary coughing or other noises at this moment. Therefore, the five older students above them could only helplessly leave after quickly scanning the area once.

After their group left, Bai Shan's body moved slightly, wanting to stand up. However, Xiao Yan's expression changed slightly as he softly said: "Don't move"

"What are you so anxious for? They've already left." Bai Shan was extremely unhappy with Xiao Yan's scolding and could not resist biting back. Although his mouth said this, his body still obeyed and did not dare to make too large of a movement.

Xiao Yan ignored him. He only turned his gaze towards the position where the five people had vanished. Upon seeing this action of his, Bai Shan and the others were startled and could only continue to move along with his gaze.

The silent atmosphere shrouded the forest in such a manner for around three to four minutes before the tree branches, which the gazes of Xiao Yan and the others, suddenly shook. Immediately, a few human figures landed on them and appeared. From their appearance, it was shockingly the same group of people who should have left earlier. Immediately, Bai Shan's expression changed slightly and he felt a little bitter.

"There is no one. Liu Mu, you really are paranoid. We cannot exhaust our time in this manner." The people on the tree branches shook their

heads when they saw that there was still no movement. They then turned their bodies to face the skinny, green-clothed, young man and said.

The young man, who was called Liu Mu, helplessly nodded. He hesitatingly said: "I practice Wood affinity Dou Qi, therefore my senses are much sharper than ordinary people in this forest. Earlier... perhaps it is really was me sensing wrong. Let's go." Even though he said this, he was still a little uncertain. He could only wave over that feeling. After which, he turned around and rushed towards another part of the dense forest. Four other human figures followed closely behind him.

"The people in this Inner Academy are indeed not people of ordinary caliber..." Xiao Yan eyed the group, which was becoming distant. Only then did he slowly stand up from the bushes and let out a sigh. If it was not because of his use of Spiritual Perception to survey their surroundings, he might really be caught by those fellows who appeared to have left but were actually hiding in the corner, peeping back.

Hu Jia and the others also crawled out from the bushes and stood up. Their gazes shifted from the spot where that group of people earlier had left from and turned towards Xiao Yan. The gazes of Hu Jia, Wu Hao, and even Bai Shan more or less had a trace of being convinced. At the very least, when they had not discovered the other party's trace, Xiao Yan had the ability to sense it first and brought them to avoid the original situation, where they would get caught. Just on this point, Xiao Yan was successful in being this group leader.

"Let's go. It is just that instead of scurrying around wildly like we had been before, we no longer know what position we are in right now, so if we just randomly charge around..." Xiao Yan frowned a little as he slowly said.

"I feel that... should we think of ways to obtain some information regarding this forest? The exact number of older students who are participating in this hunting competition and their level of strength? Otherwise, if we just go rampaging around all the way, we will end up falling into a situation of being surrounded due to the lack of information about our opponents. Perhaps we might be able to obtain victory when we face one group of older students. However, if we end up attracting the

other groups of older students during the fight, I think that we are unlikely to be able to defeat all of them, right? For some unknown reason, these students of the Inner Academy seem to be very experienced in fighting...” Xun Er hesitated a little before suddenly opening her mouth to speak.

Xiao Yan and the others were startled when they heard this. They immediately mused for a while and nodded. What Xun Er said was true. In this place where they were unfamiliar with the terrain and people, they would sooner or later meet some older students who were stronger than themselves if they were to randomly run everywhere and their speed would slow.

“In this place, the people who have the information we seek seems to be only those Inner Academy’s students, right? Don’t tell me that we should get the information from their hands?” Bai Shan knit his eyebrows together and said.

Xiao Yan’s hand fondled his chin. A long while later, he voiced his thoughts: “Let’s walk for a bit and take a look around. If there is a chance for us to act, we can perhaps choose a group of older students to strike. We are not like those ordinary groups. As long as we are more careful and don’t attract the other groups of older students over. I think that we should be able to eat one of them.”

“Uh?” The expressions on Hu Jia and the others faces were stunned when they heard Xiao Yan’s words. Other new students were thinking of methods to avoid the groups of seniors, however, Xiao Yan was actually now trying to attack an older students’ group?

“This is too risky.” Bai Shan shook his head in disagreement.

“Everyone, sharpening the axe will not interfere with chopping the wood. If we were to stroll in this vast forest by ourselves, how long would it take? Moreover, you should also have seen just how much those older students seem to covet this so called ‘Fire Energy’. I think that this should be an extremely important aspect in the Inner Academy. Since they are able to snatch our ‘Fire Energy’, why can’t we snatch theirs? In order for us not to regret our decisions in the future, we would not lose out by

taking such risks.” Xiao Yan waved the black crystal sheet in his hand and said smilingly.

A glint flashed across Hu Jia’s and Wu Hao’s eyes as they felt some motivation. They mused for a while before the two of them nodded their heads heavily: “We can try.”

Xiao Yan sighed in relief when he saw that the two of them did not disagree. He turned his head, threw his gaze towards Bai Shan, asked with a smile: “What about you?”

Bai Shan’s expression repeatedly changed in front of the gazes of Xiao Yan and the three others. It was a long while later before he clenched his teeth hard and said: “Alright. Let’s try. However, I will say this beforehand. If any accidents are to happen, you, the group leader, will be held responsible for dealing with it.”

Xiao Yan smilingly nodded. He simply acted as though he had not heard the last sentence as he waved his hand and said: “Since everyone shares the same opinion, let’s go. Instead of being robbed by others, why don’t we go and snatch what belongs to them?”

Once he said this, Xiao Yan took the lead to move his body, turning into a black shadow that flashed into the dense thicket. Xun Er and the others followed closely behind.

After deciding to accept the strategy, Xiao Yan and the others began to place their attention on those groups of older students that they occasionally found. Nearly two hours later, they had met a total of three groups but they could not help but give up the opportunity to attack as the three groups were fighting far too close to one another.

Xiao Yan and the other four people once again watched a group of older students flash past them, above their heads, from within the dense bushes. They helplessly shook their heads. Xiao Yan could sense that there was another group, which had stopped around one hundred meters north of their location. The fighting noise here would definitely be transmitted over. Hence, for their own safety, they could only continue to give up this opportunity to attack.

Xiao Yan gestured to the few people behind him. Therefore, the four of them, whose Dou Qi had already began to circulate, could only once again calm down.

Not long after that group of older students passed them, Xiao Yan was about to stand up and lead them away when his footsteps paused. He tilted his head and threw his gaze towards the north. He sensed that the group there had suddenly stopped.

“Go.” Xiao Yan hesitated for a moment. He waved his hand and immediately lead the four others as they moved like moles, passing through the dense thicket and quickly headed north.

After around five minutes, the bodies of Xiao Yan and the others suddenly paused. Their gazes passed through the gaps between the dense leaves, and eyed the empty ground outside. At this moment, there were ten human figures interweaving and flashing. Every once in awhile, a young person who would vomit blood and faint. This pattern continued for two or three minutes before the five young people, who were clearly new students, were completely defeated. Their group was then surrounded in the middle of the empty ground. Around them were five older students who were standing around them lazily. Faint Dou Qi extended and appeared on their fists.

Xun Er, Hu Jia, and the other two turned their gazes towards Xiao Yan after watching the scene on the empty ground. Clearly, they were waiting for his decision.

Xiao Yan's eyes narrowed. His Spiritual Perception was spread out to its limits at this moment. His eyes slowly opened as he nodded slightly.

“Tsk tsk, we are really lucky today, having already met two groups of new students. Ha ha, our acquisition is not bad.” A blue-clothed young man on the open ground eyed his card having gained 3 more ‘Fire Energy’. He could not help but lick his lips as he said this with a smile.

“Hey juniors, thank you very much. If you are dissatisfied, you can come to the Inner Academy to look for us in the future. We await your challenge any time. Of course, the precondition is that you must have sufficient ‘Fire

Energy’.” The blue-clothed young man waved the Crystal Card in his hand at the green-faced new students as he gloatingly said.

“Let’s go and look for the next target.” Once he said these words, the blue-clothed young man waved his hand. His four companions turned around and immediately rushed off in another direction.

“There is no need to look. We are here.”

Just as the blue-clothed young man’s five man group was about to turn around, a faint laughter suddenly sounded from the tree branches. The former hurriedly lifted their heads only to see that there were three men and two women who had appeared on the surrounding tree branches at an unknown time and had already surrounded them.

The blue-clothed young man’s group was surprised by the five new students who has just appeared. They could not really recover. Weren’t all the new students supposed to be fleeing like some mice? Why did these few fellows actually dare to openly appear in front of them?

“Oh, what beautiful girls. Everyone, be a little gentler when you attack later. Otherwise, if we are to leave a bad impression, there would no longer be a chance in the future.” A moment later, the blue-clothed young man’s five man group finally recovered. Their gazes swept across the few people on the branches before their gazes brightened greatly as they stopped on the two young ladies. Immediately, their teasing laughter sounded.

“What about those three fellows?” One of his companion asked smilingly.

The blue-robed young man smiled when he heard this. A fierce aura flashed across their eyes as they spread their hands and said helplessly: “Since these new students are so arrogant, we as their seniors, should naturally properly teach them how they should survive in the Inner Academy, right? Therefore, let them see some blood first. This kind of method is the most effective one in letting them understand just what kind of attitudes they should maintain within the Inner Academy.”

“Haha.” When they heard his words, the four older students by his side

laughed. They immediately raised their heads, and their gazes were filled with ill-intent as they stared at the three young men on the tree branches.

“Their strength is barely around that of a two star Da Dou Shi. Each of us can take care of one. Do not drag it out. Finish the battles quickly. Remember, we cannot let any of them flee!” Xiao Yan eyed the five older students on the empty ground below indifferently. He turned his head to look at Xun Er, Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia as he reminded.

“Yes.” The four of them nodded slightly. They exchanged glances with one another as their bodies shook slightly. Powerful Dou Qi suddenly surged out of their bodies. They immediately moved and appeared on the empty ground as fast as lightning!

At the moment Xun Er’s powerful Dou Qi and the others’ Dou Qi surged out, the expressions of the blue clothed man’s group of five finally changed drastically. Looking just at these Qis of theirs, these five new students were actually all much stronger than them!

“We have kicked an iron plate this time! Why are these new students so strong?” A thought that was anything but assuring swiftly flashed across the blue-clothed young man’s heart. He waved his hand. However, before he could even utter the words to shout at his companions to hurriedly retreat, a black shadow suddenly and strangely appeared in front of him. The eyes of the former shrunk. His fist, which contained powerful Dou Qi, did not hesitate even a little as it was ferociously swung at the black shadow’s head.

At the instant that the blue-clothed young man threw his punch, the black shadow moved. A sharp force actually caused the air to emit a muffled sonic boom as a punch came in a lightning-like manner. Regardless of speed or strength, it far surpassed the attack of the blue-clothed young man!

“This time around, our boat is about to sink in the Gutters.” A horrorstruck feeling surfaced within the blue-clothed young man’s heart, as he sensed the strength and speed in which the black shadow unleashed that punch. He lifted his gaze and saw a delicate and handsome face that

carried some coldness along with a pair of dark, ink-black eyes.

TL: boat is about to sink in the Gutters – meaning something totally unexpected or should not happen happened.

Chapter 439: The Use of 'Fire Energy'

That pair of fists each contained powerful, surging Dou Qi. An instant later, they crashed into each other and an underlying force rippled out. Wherever it crossed, it acted like a wave that came surging out violently. At that moment, all the withered leaves on the ground, around the two of them, were lifted and drifted all over the place.

“Glug!”

As the two fists came into contact, the blue-clothed young man was finally able to genuinely feel just how terrifying the strength contained in Xiao Yan's fist was. The instant their fists came into contact, a numbing feeling began to spread through his arm from his hand. Finally, an underlying force that caused people's expression to change exploded out, moving along the point of contact between the fists, and transmitted into the blue-clothed young man's body. Finally, it resulted in him spitting out a mouthful of bright red, fresh blood.

After spitting out a mouthful of fresh blood, the blue-clothed young man's footsteps hurriedly took a couple of steps back. A ferocious aura swept past his face. He shook his body, and a pale, blue-colored Dou Qi swiftly swarmed out of his body. After which, it formed a blue-colored Dou Qi Armor on the surface of his body. However, the moment the Dou Qi Armor had just formed, the black shadow once again appeared in front of him like a ghost. A cold laughter was transmitted towards him. Immediately, a dazed look rose from the eyes of the blue-clothed young man. Quickly following this, an immense pain spread out from his chest. Finally, he felt that his body fell and shot backwards before smashing heavily against a tree trunk a moment later. Another mouthful of fresh blood was spat out. The blue-clothed young man lowered his head with great difficulty and was shocked as he discovered that his Dou Qi Armor, which he had just congealed earlier, had actually shattered with just one strike from the opponent.

The body of the blue-clothed young man huddled up like a large prawn. Before he raised his head, he heard another muffled sound sounding off to

the side. After that, his four companions rolled towards his side with faces that were similarly dripping with blood. Only at this moment, was there truly an additional panic on his face.

The blue-clothed young man hugged his chest as a pair of legs suddenly appeared in front of him. A faint voice also sounded: "If you want to continue being beaten, then you can all curl up. I don't mind throwing a few more kicks."

When he heard these words, the entire body of the blue-clothed young man trembled. After which, he hurriedly lifted his head while shivering a little. He eyed the black-robed young man in front of him as well as the two men and two women behind him. There was some terror in his eyes. "You... what do all of you want?"

"I will ask the questions and all you need to do is answer." From a higher vantage point, Xiao Yan looked down at the five older students who wore horrified expressions. His hand slowly held the Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back and immediately drew it in a sudden motion. The heavy ruler carried an enormous pressuring sound of wind as it was inserted into the ground in front of the young man's face. The large ruler's body gave the latter an enormous sense of pressure bearing down on him.

"What would you like to ask?" The blue-clothed young man swallowed a mouthful of saliva. He also slowly became calm. No matter what happens, something like killing people was not allowed within this forest according to the rules. Otherwise, the Elders, who were observing all activities within this forest at all times, would immediately reveal themselves. The punishment for those who broke the rules would be determined based on the situation. Therefore, other than needing to be a little worried that they would suffer physical pain, they had nothing to worry about with regards to their lives.

"How large is this forest?" Xiao Yan mused for a moment. The first thing he asked was the simplest but also the most important question. If the size of the forest was large, then he would need to make preparations for a long-term battle. If it was small, they could perhaps change their tactics and directly go on a rampage and charge directly to their destination.

“Very big.” The blue-clothed young man replied, causing Xiao Yan to helplessly sigh in his heart.

“Do you have a rough map route?” Xiao Yan glanced at the blue-clothed young man. However, he suddenly waved his hands, tilting his head towards Xun Er and the four others: “Each of you grab one person and question them in one corner. After that, we will check if the information each one gives us is legitimate. If someone’s answer is different from the others, then he should not blame us for being ruthless. Although we cannot take people’s lives here, accidentally beating them until they are seriously injured should not be against the rules, right?”

Xiao Yan had naturally turned his body towards the blue-clothed young man’s five man team and spoke the last sentence to them with a smile.

Xiao Yan’s ruthless heart directly caused the expressions of the five people to turn extremely ugly. This kind of action completely dispelled their intentions to lie.

Hu Jia and the three others each led one incumbent student, and walked towards their own corner. When Wu Hao was leading one of them, a voice was involuntarily transmitted out from under the blood robes: “Good tactic.”

Xiao Yan smiled, turned his body and threw his gaze onto the blue-clothed young man. He slowly said: “Answer now.”

“There is a rough route map. However, it is cannot be considered precise. This map is something that we bought in the Inner Academy before participating in the Hunting Competition. We spent one day’s worth of ‘Fire Energy’.” The blue-clothed young man laughed bitterly as he obediently took out a rough piece of paper and handed it to Xiao Yan.

“Don’t all of you view the ‘Fire Energy’ as extremely important? You are actually willing to spend it to buy such a coarse item?” Xiao Yan received the piece of paper. The route on the map had exceeded the tolerable limits, appearing like a few large black crosses. This caused the corner of Xiao Yan’s mouth to involuntarily twitched a couple of times. Could this even be called a map?

“No one is willing. However, this is something the Inner Academy forces us to buy. We have no choice but to buy one.” The corner of the blue-clothed young man’s mouth shivered a little when this was mentioned. A pain surfaced on his face as he spoke in a biting manner. When he had to purchase this broken thing, his heart was dripping blood. If it was not because because they could snatch the ‘Fire Energy’ from the new students if they participated in the hunting competition, he would not have willingly spent one day’s worth of ‘Fire Energy’ to buy this nonsense map even if he were beaten to death. Those bastards in the Inner Academy were really blood sucking demons.

“How many older students are participating in this Hunting Competition?” Xiao Yan kept the route map properly and asked with a frown.

“There are around fifty people. Five people to a group with a total of ten groups.” The blue-clothed young man’s eyed the other four corners where interrogations were going on and sighed. He could not tell if his companions would tell the truth or lie. However, if he was to compare the chances of the two, he could only choose to tell the truth.

“What are their strengths like? Are they approximately the same as all of you?” Xiao Yan continued to ask.

Xiao Yan’s words caused the blue-clothed young man to roll his eyes. What was ‘approximately the same as all of you’?

“There are eight groups which are approximately the same as us. We are all students who entered the Inner Academy last year. There are still two more groups, who are the older students from the previous year. They have stayed in the Inner Academy for a longer time than us. Therefore, their strength is stronger than us. I think that they are likely around your level...” The blue-clothed young man looked at Xiao Yan somewhat strangely, seemingly muttering to himself about; “Why was it that this new student was actually so strong?” It should be known that last year, when their batch of new students just entered the academy, even the few fellows ranked in the top five were also robbed once in this forest. Although they did resist, the conflict between each of them after that resulted in them

having difficulty forming a large scale retaliation. Therefore, they were each separated and defeated. It was totally unlike this strange occurrence this year where the older students were being robbed instead.

As he thought of this depressing matter, the blue-clothed young man had the impulse to scold his mother. They were similarly new students, but why was it that the gap between their treatments were so big?

“Around the same as me?” Xiao Yan frowned intently when he heard this. The members of these two groups were about as strong as him. That was a little troublesome. It appeared that there would really be some difficulty in trying to break through this ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ with ease.

“Those two groups are very easy to identify. All the members of one of the groups are dressed in black, while the other is dressed in all white. In the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ each year, there would be two strong groups participating. The Inner Academy calls these two strongest groups the ‘Black White Evil Stopper’. In the last ten years, no one has heard of any new student group being able to break through their obstruction.” There was some respect in the voice of the blue-clothed young man.

“‘Black White Evil Stopper’?” Xiao Yan uttered this name in his mouth as he nodded slightly. He turned around and exchanged glances with Xun Er and the others. After which, he asked the the most important question: “What is the use of this so-called ‘Fire Energy’ within the Inner Academy? Why are all of you so crazy about it?”

“‘Fire Energy’ is the most important thing in the Inner Academy. This is also the reason why the strength of the new students would increase by leaps and bounds after entering the Inner Academy to train.” The blue-robed young man hesitated before answering this question for quite a while before he helplessly opened his mouth to speak when Xiao Yan grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler with his hand: “In the Inner Academy, there is a ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ buried underground. If one were to train within the tower, one would be able to obtain the strange effect of gaining more with less effort. Moreover, the farther down one

goes to train in the tower, the faster the training speed. Of course, the price is also expensive to the point of being outrageous...”

“If one wanted to enter the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’, one must have sufficient ‘Fire Energy’ in their Fire Crystal Card for the expenses. ‘Fire Energy’ appears in numbers of days. The Fire Crystal Card in your hands is able to cover the cost of you all training in the tower for five days. After five days, you can only go and earn ‘Fire Energy’ by yourself. Of course, on the first day of every month, the Inner Academy will also give everyone seven days worth of ‘Fire Energy’ as... living expenses.” When he said this last phrase, the expression of the blue-clothed young man was a little strange.

Xiao Yan’s face was stunned when he heard the words of the blue-clothed young man. It was unexpected that the training method of the Inner Academy was so strange yet wonderful. If one wanted to enter the so-called ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ to train, one actually needed to pay a fee. This so called fee was the ‘Fire Energy’ on the Fire Crystal Card...

“If one wanted to train, one would need to use the ‘Fire Energy’ as an expense. No wonder these fellows covet the ‘Fire Energy’ in our hands to such an extent...” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly. He glanced at the blue-clothed young man and said softly: “Then what if we use up all the ‘Fire Energy’ on it? How do we get more? Don’t tell me that we can only wait until it is distributed the next month?”

“Of course not. In the Inner Academy, you can obtain ‘Fire Energy’ using various different means. For example, you can sweep the tower, copy scrolls, etc. Naturally, the ‘Fire Energy’ one gets by relying on this is way too little. Therefore, some of the stronger students would go and hunt Magical Beasts, using their Monster Core to exchange for ‘Fire Energy’. Alternatively, they can find someone to challenge. As long as the other party agrees, they would be able to compete in the Inner Academy’s Sports Arena. The one who wins would be able to obtain the ‘Fire Energy’ that is deducted from the loser. In summary, there are quite a number of methods to obtain ‘Fire Energy’. However, there is one precondition. That

is you must have sufficient strength. Otherwise, not only will you not be able to earn 'Fire Energy', but you will also lose everything you have." The blue-clothed young man spread his hands, hesitated a little, before continuing: "There is one more method to earn 'Flame Energy'. That is to ascend to the top of the 'Strong Ranking' in the Inner Academy. As the name suggests, this is the ranking system that is used to measure one's strength. It is also the ranking that is worth the most in the Inner Academy. There are only fifty names on the ranking. As long as you are able to grasp a position on it, you will be able to obtain the reward that the Inner Academy issues each month. The reward is linked with the rank. One would naturally get more the higher up the ranking they are. In that case, they would be able to hide themselves within the 'Sky Flame Qi Training Tower' all day to train and need not worry about exhausting the 'Fire Energy'. Therefore, all the students in the Inner Academy are working hard and striving towards this 'Strong Ranking'. That competition is so intense, that it simply leaves one speechless. There are many people who got onto the ranking on the first day before they were pulled down on the second day by people who desperately challenged them."

Xiao Yan exhaled a deep breath of air and nodded slightly. Although his expression was calm, his heart was already beginning to be hooked by the mysterious rules of the Inner Academy, forming true anticipation and curiosity. This kind of extreme system was indeed worthy of being the cradle which created strong people.

In the Outer Academy, it was extremely difficult for the students to feel such competition. Therefore, the Outer Academy may not be short of people with outstanding talent, but it was ultimately impossible for them to compete with the Inner Academy. This was because the system here was basically created to groom strong people!

"'Fire Energy'... Ha ha, looks like it is indeed something that really hooks onto people's hearts. Now, even the temptation of this 'Fire Energy' has hooked onto the desires of my heart." Xiao Yan laughed softly. He turned his head to eye Xun Er and the other three. Coincidentally, they had also turned their gazes towards him. The five gazes interlaced with one

another and each of them could see the heat in each other's eyes. Clearly, this Inner Academy had also caused them to be interested. The 'Fire Energy' was also firmly branded into their hearts.

In the Inner Academy, having 'Fire Energy' meant that their training speed would increase. It also represented that their distance on the journey of becoming strong people was becoming closer!

“‘Fire Energy’... is indeed something good...”

Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. The corner of his mouth was suddenly lifted into a evil smile that caused the blue clothed young man's heart to feel a chill. He lowered his head and smiled as he watched the latter. In a harmonious manner, he said: “Thank you senior for informing me. However, can you please hand me the Fire Crystal Card in your hand next?”

The blue-clothed young man widened his mouth as he eyed Xiao Yan's smile. His expression changed drastically. Dou Qi flowed suddenly. However, before he could even make a move, a huge, black shadow, carrying a pressuring wind sound, smashed down heavily, finally stopping just in front of the pale face belonging to the blue-clothed young man.

The blue clothed young man swallowed a mouthful of saliva with great difficulty as he eyed that enormous ruler's body. A long while later, his face was ashen as he sat back down on the ground. His hands quivered as he took a pale-blue Fire Crystal Card out of his storage ring.

Xiao Yan smilingly received this pale-blue-colored Fire Crystal Card. When he gaze saw the red-colored 28 on it, the smile on Xiao Yan's face grew much richer than before.

Xiao Yan held the black and blue Crystal Cards. After which, he rubbed them heavily. A glow flashed and on the dark black card, the number 5 turned to 26 while that the pale-blue card shrunk to a 7.

“Starting from now, the position of the hunter and the hunted in this Hunting Competition is going to be reversed. This is because this hunted have already begun to feel some interest towards the hunters...”

Xiao Yan softly muttered as he eyed the 26 on his dark, black Fire Crystal Card.

Chapter 440: The Switch Between The Hunter And The Hunted

The five new students, whose entire bodies were covered in bruises and had traces of blood on the corner of their mouths eyed Xiao Yan's group with stunned expressions. Only at this moment did they realize what had happened in this sudden turn of events. These fellows were actually snatching the 'Fire Energy' from the older students?

The corner of their mouths twitched a couple of times. These five unlucky new students, who were robbed by the blue-clothed young man's group earlier, saw that Xiao Yan's group actually rudely knocked out the five Inner Academy older students after snatching their 'Fire Energy.' Their expressions were extremely brilliant. Not that long ago, they exchanged blows with this group of older students. However, after merely just a few exchanges, they were completely defeated by these strong older students who had a wealth of battle experience. However, now... The group of older students, who had been swaggering triumphantly after their previous victory, had ended up in a miserable state, similar to their own, within just two to three minutes of fighting with Xiao Yan's group. This huge gap really caused these students to feel a little dull.

"They are indeed worthy of being the top five ranked people of the Qualifying Competition. Their strength is actually this great." As the new students being hunted this time around, they naturally knew Xiao Yan's five man group. However, they still did not expect that when these five people gathered together, they were actually able to defeat the older students within the Inner Academy. This group was really strong.

"Tsk tsk, it is really expected that the Inner Academy is actually this unique. It really did not betray my expectations."

Hu Jia played with the Fire Crystal Card in her hand, and glanced at the five Inner Academy students, who had been forcefully beaten until they fainted, and tied to a tree trunk by Xiao Yan. She laughed in a lovely voice. Earlier, she had obtained eighteen days worth of 'Fire Energy' from the

older student she had just interrogated. Therefore, the number on her Fire Crystal Card had already turned from five to twenty-three.

“How unfortunate. We are actually unable to snatch away all the ‘Fire Energy’ in their hands and must leave a seven day minimum of ‘Fire Energy’.” Hu Jia was a little regretful as she looked at the crystal card in her hand and muttered.

“Looks like the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ in the Inner Academy should be the reason why the students of the Inner Academy are able to train this quickly. It is really astonishing.” Xun Er gently smiled and said.

“It is indeed beyond my expectations.” Wu Hao slowly nodded and continued, “However, if we were to compare, I am more interested in that so-called ‘Strong Ranking.’ I will find an opportunity to challenge them after we enter the Inner Academy.”

Xiao Yan helplessly shook his head when he heard the heated fighting spirit hidden in Wu Hao’s words. This person was too crazy about fighting.

“What should we do next?” Bai Shan’s usually ice-cold expression also had a rare smile at this moment. The reason was something that everyone naturally understood; the twenty days of ‘Fire Energy’ that he had plundered from the unfortunate fellow’s hands.

Xiao Yan’s gaze swept over the faces of the five older students, who had been knocked out. After ensuring that they did not have any reaction, he raised his head and took out the extremely crude route map from his storage ring. After looking at it for a long while, he finally pointed at a certain spot with some hesitation and said, “The size of this forest is extremely large. Our current position should be around here. If we continue walking along this path, we might be able to walk out of this forest within a day’s time.”

“Let’s hurry. Don’t waste any more time.” Bai Shan hurriedly urged when he heard this.

Xiao Yan looked at him, but did not move. The dark, black, crystal sheet was swiftly rotated between his fingers. His black eyes flashed slightly. A

moment later, he moved his finger and clipped the crystal card precisely between his fingers. With a smile, he said, “Everyone, since you all already know about the importance of ‘Fire Energy’ within the Inner Accademy, do all of you want to take this chance to obtain a little more?”

“Who doesn’t want more? I earnestly wish to be able to obtain enough ‘Fire Energy’ to be able to train in the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ for a whole year.” Hu Jia curled her lip and replied. The others also nodded a little. From the mouths of the few older students, they had also clearly understood just how important and necessary the ‘Fire Energy’ was for those within the Inner Academy.

“In that case, are you all willing to take a risk for the possibility to obtain more ‘Fire Energy?’” Xiao Yan smiled as he spoke.

“What do you mean?” Bai Shan frowned slightly. His eyebrows twitched as he said in surprise, “Don’t tell me that you are targeting other groups of older student?”

“Since they can snatch ours, why can’t we snatch theirs?” Xiao Yan smiled faintly and continued, “Moreover, if we were to look at it in terms of strength, with the exception of the two so-called ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ groups, any of the individual remaining groups would be unable to contend with us so long as we don’t let them join forces and attack us. This is our opportunity! What do you say? Do you dare to give it a try?”

Hu Jia, Wu Hao, and Bai Shan fell into silence when they heard these words from Xiao Yan. Xun Er gently laughed and still stood by Xiao Yan’s side, using her actions to express her choice.

The silence continued for a moment. Wu Hao was the first to nod his head as he replied in a deep voice, “There is only reward if there is risk. As long as you dare to do it, I will not cower even a little.”

“Ah, crazy fellow. Alright, alright, who asked me to also greatly lust for ‘Fire Energy.’” Hu Jia spread her hands and spoke helplessly.

“Alright, I have no objections either.” Seeing that everyone had agreed, Bai Shan glanced at the Crystal Card in his hand once again before clenching his teeth and saying, “I’ll go all out.”

“Alright, since everyone has agreed, then this will be our course of direction for now.” Xiao Yan clapped his hands and smiled. He immediately hesitated a little before saying in a deep voice, “However, before we begin, I will say this first. Should we not first decide how we should distribute the ‘Fire Energy’ should we once again successfully obtain it from another group? I don’t want a situation where the group breaks apart as a result of unequal distribution.”

Bai Shan and the others were startled when they heard this. They immediately nodded. If this problem was not properly resolved, it might really result in the group breaking apart. Should the group break apart in this kind of place, any single person among them would unlikely be able to rely on his own strength to successfully walk out of the forest. What one needed in this forest was teamwork and not the courage of one person!

“Distribute it equally. If there is an instance where there is an unequal distribution, we will compensate him first the next time. What do all of you say?” Xun Er mused for a moment before opening her mouth to speak.

“I have no objections.” Hu Jia and Wu Hao nodded their heads. Soon after, Bai Shan also nodded in agreement.

“Since this is the case, then let’s act according to this distribution pattern.” Xiao Yan sighed in relief within his heart. He saw that their most realistic problem, which was also the one that was the easiest to break apart the group, had been settled so easily. He turned his body around to glance at the five new students, whose faces were covered in bruises, not far away. He waved his hand and threw over a few jade bottles. “These are healing medicine. They will help reduce your external wounds.”

The new students scrambled to catch the healing medicine that Xiao Yan had thrown over. They were stunned. A warm feeling flowed through their hearts as they nodded heavily toward Xiao Yan. Their eyes were filled with a kind of gratitude.

Sending charcoal in the snow is forever an action that would easily capture people’s hearts.

TL; Sending charcoal in the snow – Giving people what they need the most when they are in trouble

Xiao Yan randomly waved his hand and called toward Hu Jia and the other three. Immediately, five human figures dashed into the thicket, and swiftly disappeared.

Now, the hunted began to look for the hunters to attack!

There were two old men seated cross-legged on top of a huge tree within the forest. Their bodies did not move even a little. The gentle breeze blew over them, but the clothes on their bodies were like steel and did not even shift, appearing extremely strange.

At a certain moment, the two old men, who had their eyes shut, suddenly opened their eyes. They looked at each other and saw a hint of shock and laughter within each other's eyes.

“Hee hee, good, good.... the new students this year are much more interesting than those of the previous years.” A gray-robed old man was the first to open his mouth as he spoke with a smile.

“Those five little fellows should be the top five ranked of this year's Qualifying Competition, right? Their strengths are all quite good and their potentials are extraordinary. No wonder they are able to even beat senior student groups from the Inner Academy.” The other blue-robed old man nodded and praised.

“That little fellow leading them seems to be called Xiao Yan, right? He is quite bold. I like him.” The gray-robed old man fondled his beard as he spoke with a smile. Hearing the conversation, it appeared as though they had witnessed all of the actions of Xiao Yan's group.

“Ke ke, he is indeed quite good. Originally, that group was not harmonious but this little fellow integrated them together. The top five students in the Qualifying Competition of the previous years were all filled with haughtiness and none of them would submit to each other. Finally, they were separated and defeated by the older student groups from the Inner Academy. This time though, this group just might be able to exceed people's expectations.” The blue-robed old man laughed as he

replied.

“However, we are also unable to conclude results now. The ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ this year is a group of fellows that has come running out from the battle arena. Their strength is not something that an ordinary group can compare with. If that group of Xiao Yan’s were to meet them, it is difficult to say just who would win and who would lose.” The gray-robed old man said with interest.

“Yes, all of those fellows have experienced hundreds of battles. They are extremely rich in battle experience and the teamwork and cooperation that exists between them is at a very high level. If Xiao Yan’s group were to meet them, it is likely they will have a tough battle. However, I really like the exchanges between the strong.” The blue-robed old man let loose a soft laugh, which actually contained some anticipation within it.

“It seems that we are not going to be so bored in the near future. Let’s wait to see a good show.” The two old men faced each other and laughed softly. Immediately, they once again slowly shut their eyes.

.....

Five human figures slowly walked over a pile of withered leaves within the dense forest. As their feet stepped on the withered leaves, they emitted a soft ‘sha sha’ sound. All of these five people wore a tower-shaped badge on their chest.

“Aren’t we too unlucky? Since we entered the forest, we haven’t met a single group of new students? If this continues, we won’t even be able to recoup the capital we used to participate in the Hunting Competition!” A young man, among the five people, suddenly could not resist cursing.

“Don’t create so much noise. Let’s continue looking. There are a total of fifty new students, why are you so anxious?” That man, who was leading the group, frowned as he scolded the young man.

“You five, are you looking for us?”

When the man leading the group was scolding, a soft laughter suddenly sounded not far in front of them. The five older students from the Inner

Academy were surprised. They hurriedly raised their heads, and were stunned to discover that not far away from them, a group, consisting of three males and two females, were smiling as they watched them.

“Capture them!”

The shock on the face of the man leading the group was gradually replaced with a wild joy. He let out a hurried cry and the five men suddenly went over and surrounded the newcomers.

“The old rules. One on one. We will collectively distribute the gains once we get our hands on the Crystal Cards.” Seeing that the five people had actually taken the initiative to charge forward, the smile on the black-robed young man’s face grew much richer. He turned his head to the four people behind him and smiled as he spoke.

“Yes.”

“Since we are clear, then... let’s attack. For our ‘Fire Energy!’”

The black-robed young man smiled. Immediately, five powerful auras of Dou Qi suddenly erupted from within the dense forest.

Chapter 441: Swiftly Growing

Coordination

Dou Qi suddenly surged violently within the dense forest. A moment later, a human figure slid against the ground as he shot backward before finally smashing heavily into a protruding rock that was on the ground. His face twitched and a trace of blood flowed from the corner of his mouth.

The intense pain that transmitted from his back caused a fierceness and brutality to flash across this yellow-clothed young man's eyes. However, without waiting for him to act, the black shadow in front of him suddenly flashed and stopped. An enormous, dark shadow carried the sound of wind being split as it heavily and angrily smashed at the head of the former in front of him.

"Don't!" The dark shadow pounced in front of him. The terrifying force contained in it finally caused a shock to flash across the yellow-clothed man's eyes as he cried out involuntarily.

As the voice of the yellow-clothed man sounded, the dark shadow, that was smashing toward his face, suddenly stopped. Even though the dark shadow had stopped extremely punctually, the wind that was contained with the swing still passed through the air and ruthlessly caused the yellow-clothed young man's face to go through an upheaval of changes a couple of times as though it was a water wave. Only then did he recover.

The dark shadow gradually left and an enormous ruler was heavily inserted into the ground in front of the yellow-clothed man. The black-robed young man looked down at the yellow-clothed man from above. His faint voice caused the latter's face to tremble again, "Hand over your Fire Crystal Card."

"You... you are new students. Why do you need our Fire Crystal Cards?" The yellow-clothed man swallowed a mouthful of saliva and eyed the four other intense battles going on. His eyes rotated a little as he opened his mouth to ask.

“Naturally, we want the ‘Fire Energy’...” Xiao Yan softly laughed. His palm, which was holding the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly, tightened its grasp a little further. He smiled and said, “Hand over your Fire Crystal Card within ten seconds or I will first beat you until you are half dead and take it myself. Which option do you choose?”

A coldness swarmed into the yellow-clothed man’s heart as he eyed the smiling, delicate, handsome face that belonged to Xiao Yan. This fellow was really terrifying... As he sensed the ice-cold tone within Xiao Yan’s voice, the yellow-clothed young man felt unwillingness in his heart, but he did not dare to procrastinate. His face was filled with bitterness as he took out a pale, blue-colored crystal card from his storage ring, and handed it over to Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan smiled as he received the card. His eyes glanced at the number on it: thirty-two, and nodded quietly in his heart. Not bad. A very fruitful harvest. It was really unexpected that this fellow was actually even wealthier than the people that they had previously robbed.

Xiao Yan’s body suddenly moved as he held the card in his hand. His right leg kicked at the yellow clothed man’s temple with a strength that was neither hard nor soft, coincidentally controlling the strength such that he only kicked that fellow until he fainted, and not to the extent of him losing his life.

Not long after Xiao Yan finished off the yellow-clothed man, the other four battles also approached their ends. A moment later, when four human figures bounced heavily off the ground and collided together, the battle had finally ended.

“Five Fire Crystal Cards. If we subtract the seven days of ‘guaranteed minimum’ ‘Fire Energy’, we have gotten our hands on a total of a hundred twenty-five days worth of ‘Fire Energy’, which can be distributed... Each person can coincidentally be allocated twenty-five days of ‘Fire Energy’. There is no disagreement right?” Xiao Yan received the Fire Crystal Cards from the hands of the four of them and calculated. After which, he waved the five cards and smiled as he asked them a question.

“Yes.” The four of them nodded. As they had already agreed on this distribution method, it would naturally be impossible for them to disagree.

Seeing that the four of them nodded, Xiao Yan smiled and threw the cards toward the four of them while speaking with a smile, “Everyone, take it for yourself. If there is not enough, take it from another crystal card.”

The five people held a card in each of their hands and used force to rub them against each other. A glow immediately flashed. The original red-colored number on the dark, black Crystal Card increased by a little bit once again.

After snatching the ‘Fire Energy’, Xiao Yan threw the pale-blue crystal cards back onto the chests of the few Inner Academy students. He smiled at them, who were tied to a tree trunk, immobilized, and said, “Seniors, thank you for your gift. We will repay you if we have the time to do so in the future. For now, we will first bid you farewell.”

“Hurry up and leave. I sense that there are other groups headed toward us.” Xiao Yan turned around, and spoke one sentence to Hu Jia and the other three. After which, he waved his hand and swiftly fled into the dense forest. Behind him, the four people, whose faces were filled with excitement, followed shortly after. Now, they suddenly realized that selecting Xiao Yan as the leader was quite a wise decision. In just a few hours, they had already successfully obtained the ‘Fire Energy’ from two groups of Inner Academy older students. This bountiful harvest really caused them to be extremely excited.

.....

Around five to six minutes after Xiao Yan’s group disappeared, the tree branches of this part of the forest suddenly shook a little. Immediately, five shadows flashed out. After they appeared and saw those five Inner Academy older students that had been tied to the tree, with even their mouths were covered, their faces were immediately stunned. They exchanged glances with one another. One of them carefully cut the rope. Immediately, that five unlucky people fell down flaccidly and panted swiftly.

“We were actually robbed by the new students!” After catching his breath, that yellow-clothed man immediately jumped up and cursed out loud with a green face.

The group of older students, who had just arrived after hearing the clash of the fight, were startled when they heard the curses of this yellow-clothed man. Their faces were instantly filled with strange expressions as they looked at the yellow-clothed man’s group.

“What are you looking at? If you were to meet that group, you would definitely not be in much better shape! Why does this batch of new students have such abnormal fellows?” The strange expressions of the other party caused the yellow-clothed man to be furious. He did not care whether it was this group which had fished them out of the deep waters or another. He simply parted his mouth and scolded. In any case, they may be able to rob new students in this forest, but they were also allowed to attack the older students.

“Rest assured that we will not be as useless as some people who actually had their ‘Fire Energy’ stolen by the new students. This is a strange occurrence that has never happened before in the past ten years of the inner academy. In the future, you will likely be considered famous within the Inner Academy.” A person leading that group had also become a little angry because of the yellow-clothed man’s words and was too lazy to continue stopping here. He waved his hand and led his companions to swiftly move into the dense forest. They immediately disappeared.

“When you all meet them, you will know the definition of depression. What use is there to have such a tough mouth now?!” The yellow-clothed man waved his fist furiously at the group which had just left. He took out the pale, blue-colored Fire Crystal Card from his chest and saw the eye-piercing number on it: seven. His expression was gloomy, much like a storm was about to approach. He appeared extremely frightening.

Nearly three hours after Xiao Yan robbed the yellow-clothed man’s group, they had finally met another solitary group of older Inner Academy’s students as the sky gradually became dark.

This time around, however, their plans were completely dashed. This was because this group of older students had a degree of cooperation and teamwork that far surpassed the expectations of Xiao Yan's group. When they met the two groups from the Inner Academy earlier, Xiao Yan's five man team had relied on their outstanding individual strength to spread out the opponent and finally defeat each of them individually. This time around, however, they had met a tough metal plate.

Although this group had initially felt some panic when they were ambushed by Xiao Yan's five man group, it was merely for an extremely short while before they swiftly recovered their calm. The five of them had their backs facing each other, much like a metal drum. No matter how Xiao Yan's five man group tempted them, they only relied on their excellent cooperation and teamwork, combining their strength to resolve the attacks. After this seemingly stalemate-like situation lasted for around half an hour, Xiao Yan finally made a decisive decision, waved his hand and lead his team to retreat. This time around, they returned from their hunt without reward. It was also because they had undergone this failure that they clearly understood just what kind of difference existed in the degrees of cooperation of this team of theirs when compared with those of the Inner Academy.

After recognizing their shortcomings, Xiao Yan's five man group also began to feel out and train together. After one sleepless night of training, the degree of cooperation between them may not be said to have soared greatly but compared to yesterday, it was an enormous improvement. This was because at the very least, they had recently begun to know how to join hands and not just rely on their own strength to interwise with one of the five opponents at the same time like they had initially planned.

It must be said that this one night of cooperation practice among Xiao Yan's five man group did indeed benefit them greatly. This was because the next morning, Xiao Yan's group had coincidentally and luckily met with the group that had forced them to retreat yesterday. When the two parties met, they were originally startled. Quickly following this, however, a fiery battle once again erupted!

This time around, Xiao Yan's group finally, unlike yesterday, did not feel as though their hands and legs were bound. Although they still had difficulty breaking through the metal drum-like cooperation, at the very least, there was the faint trend of them being able to retaliate.

That group from the Inner Academy also discovered Xiao Yan's group's improvement. Moreover, they were also shocked to discover that as the entanglement between both parties became more intense, the cooperation within Xiao Yan's group was also honed during the battle and gradually became more skillful. If it went on like this, it was likely that they would truly be finished off should they wait until their opponent's cooperation became even more skillful.

However, not long after Xiao Yan's group began to have the advantage, Xiao Yan's expression suddenly changed. He could sense that there seemed to be two groups around them, which were flying in their direction and hurrying to this battleground of theirs. Clearly, they were attracted by the undulations of Dou Qi caused by the fight here. Immediately, he did not dare to delay any longer. With a wave of his hand he said sternly, "Let's get out of here!"

Hearing Xiao Yan's cry, Bai Shan and the others, who had already fought until they had some feeling, were immediately stunned. Although they felt some reluctance toward leaving this good situation, due to Xiao Yan's extremely accurate warning during these two days, they could only forcefully stop and follow Xiao Yan to swiftly flee into the dense forest. Finally, they disappeared from the line of sight of the Inner Academy's group whose members were covered with perspiration after having fought against Xiao Yan's group for quite some time.

"Bastard. The improvement of these fellows is too much. The next time we meet, our cooperation is likely not going to pose much hindrance to them." A young man, who looked like the leader of this group, stared at the spot where Xiao Yan's group had disappeared into. He could not resist softly cursing with a gloomy face.

After the fight this time around ended in a draw, this group of older students from the Inner Academy suddenly felt a chill in their hearts as

they discovered that this group of new students, three men and two women, seemed to expressively hook onto them. As long as there were no other groups nearby, this group of new students, which were hiding in some dark and quiet corner, would attack them from different directions, tiring them until they were totally exhausted.

In a mere short day, this group of older students from the Inner Academy had been attacked by Xiao Yan's group no less than five times. Moreover, during these five instances, they realized that the cooperation and teamwork within Xiao Yan's group was becoming stronger and stronger. Only at this moment did they discover that these fellows were actually using them as a stepping stone!

However, by the time that they realized this, it was already a little too late. Therefore, the current them had discovered that they were once again surrounded by Xiao Yan's five man group, which had been lingering and pestering them. This time around, the cooperation that Xiao Yan's five man group displayed finally caused them to end up in despair. In less than ten minutes, the group, which had caused Xiao Yan's five man team to be at a loss on their first encounter, was attacked by this group until they fell to pieces. As the loser, the 'Fire Energy' in their hands naturally served as the spoils of war and were seized by Xiao Yan's group.

After this battle, the news that there was a group of new students who were hunting for the 'Fire Energy' in the hands of the older students of the academy had finally and gradually began to spread within the forest. Therefore, some of the groups of senior students from the Inner Academy began to panic. The entire forest for the Hunting Competition had also begun to become chaotic. The good show appeared to have formally begun.

Chapter 442: The Fighting Strength After Forming A Group

“Hei, I heard that there is a group of new students in the forest that hunt the older students instead!”

“Ah? That can’t be right? Which group is strong enough to do so? They were actually able to defeat those fellows?”

“Ha ha, who else? Of course it’s the strongest group of incoming students.”

“Xiao Yan’s group?”

“They have guts! During these two days, we, the new students, were bullied by those bastards in all sorts of ways. Now, it’s their turn to taste what it is like to be robbed and beaten. Very good! It really relieves my anger!”

“Ha ha, let’s hurry. If we are lucky, we might even be able to meet Xiao Yan’s group in the forest. As long as we follow behind them, we need not worry about those older students from the Inner Academy!”

Various different kinds of rumors began to spread throughout the forest. By this time, the matter regarding Xiao Yan’s group hunting down older students had almost spread throughout the entire forest. Regardless of whether it was the older students or the new student groups, they were all stunned by this shocking news.

Not long after this rumor began to spread, just when these people had maintained a doubtful attitude, four frighteningly gloomy-faced older student groups from the Inner Academy were filled with melancholy and anger as they directly headed to the edge of the forest without hearing or bothering to look around them. Even though they occasionally met some new student groups along the way, they did not attack them. They simply left the forest with dark and solemn faces. The new students may have had some doubts with regards to their actions but the older student groups understood it very clearly. According to the rules, if the older

student groups in the forest were to lose any of their 'Fire Energy' until they had less than ten 'Fire Energy,' they would have lost the qualifications to continue staying within the forest to participate in the Hunting Competition. Moreover, they needed to leave the vicinity immediately.

Clearly, these four groups were leaving this place, which caused them great embarrassment, in an extremely unwilling manner because the number of their 'Fire Energy' had fallen below ten.

Numerous gazes within the forest sent off the four groups. Immediately, the place became somewhat quieter. It was only a long while later that the doubt still present in some of the gazes finally and completely disappeared. Replacing it was a seriousness and faint anger.

The occurrence of new students robbing the older students instead had basically never happened during these past few years. As the older student groups within the Inner Academy, the current sudden occurrence of such an event happening within this forest was like a slap being ruthlessly thrown onto the faces by the younger classmen. Moreover, this slap was actually loud and clear.

"New students who are acting in an uppity manner? They will pay the price because of their own arrogance..." The gazes of all the older students withdrew from the edge of the forest as they spoke viciously. Immediately, one human figure after another suddenly flashed out from within the forest. Some groups, who thought highly of themselves, began to be unable to endure it any longer as they took the initiative to begin searching for Xiao Yan's group. Each year, the new students were suppressed by the older students. This was basically a tradition at this point. Therefore, they really did not want any new students to break this cycle that they had once undergone. Hence, they currently needed to completely kill off the arrogance of that group of new students!

Due to this, the few groups of older students began to rifle through the entire forest. However, after searching for an entire day, they did not find the slightest traces of Xiao Yan's group. Just as they thought that Xiao Yan's five men group had begun fleeing far away out of fear, this arrogant new student group once again appeared against everyone's expectations.

.....

In an empty clearing within the forest, withered, yellow leaves were spread all over the ground, forming a thick layer that looked like a yellow-colored carpet.

At this moment, there were five new students, whose faces were covered with dirt and dust on this open ground. They had their backs facing each other as they formed a small circle. Their gazes were filled with anger as they eyed the five young men who had surrounded them. Each of these five young men wore a tower-shaped badge on their chest.

“Hand over the ‘Fire Energy’ and you will avoid a ruthless beating, what do you say?” A young man, who was clearly an older student within the Inner Academy, lifted his eyes. His hair was gathered at his shoulders. At one glance, he had a feminine aura. At this moment, this long-haired young man was eyeing the five new students putting up a resistance as he said with a faint smile.

“Hand over my ass. If you want, you can directly come and snatch it. I, your father, will go all out and bite you once even if I have to endure a hard beating.” The five new students, who were surrounded, had a tough character and plenty of attitude. They carelessly wiped the traces of blood from the corner of their mouths and one of them immediately spat out blood as he cursed furiously.

TL: Your father – This is a chinese way of cursing where one refers to himself as the other party’s father

“Ke ke, what a hard bone.” The long-haired young man clapped his hands and laughed softly, “Alright. Since you all won’t cooperate, we can only knock you down first and take it for ourselves.”

“Bah! What is there to be arrogant about? Don’t think that you can walk horizontally without fear just because you are older students! When you all meet Senior Xiao Yan and the others, you can only obediently hand over your ‘Fire Energy.’ Ha ha, who says that us new students don’t have the ability to resist?” A new student laughed out loud. The laughter contained a ridicule that was difficult to hide.

“Xiao Yan?” The eyebrows of the long-haired young man jumped a little when he heard this name. The smile on his face gradually paled as he coldly laughed, “It seems that all of you have placed your hopes on them. Unfortunately, that group has disappeared during these past two days. Who knows where they have gone to hide themselves? The next time that they appear, their ending will not be much better than yours. Hence, stop having such daydreams. Obediently hand over your ‘Fire Energy’ and you can avoid a harsh beating.”

Once he said that, the long-haired young man waved his hand. His four companions, who had surrounded the new students, slowly took a step forward. Powerful Dou Qi rose from within their bodies. As the Dou Qi flowed, many of the the withered yellow leaves began to flutter around.

“Ke ke, this senior, are you referring to us?” Just as that group of older students was preparing to defeat the audacious group in one go, a soft laughter suddenly sounded out, ringing throughout the empty clearing.

The sudden voice that had sounded caused the flowing Dou Qi in this place to become a little dull. All gazes suddenly followed the direction where the voice had come from, where it was thrown over. Finally, they stopped on a tree branch outside the open area. At that spot, three males and two females had unknowingly appeared. They were smiling as they stood there. The black-robed young man leading them had a large, black ruler strapped to his back, revealing their identities.

“Senior Xiao Yan!”

The group of new students, who were surrounded, paused their stunned gazes on the black-robed young man before a wild joy immediately swarmed onto their faces. An excited voice was involuntarily shouted out. In this forest, where the new students could only be bullied, Xiao Yan’s group was undoubtedly the life-saving last straw within the hearts of all the new students. This was because this was the only group who had successfully defeated the older students.

“You are Xiao Yan? In that case, you must be that group who is running around hunting down the older students for their ‘Fire Energy,’ right?”

When he heard the young man's shout, the expression of that long-haired youth changed slightly. His gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan's five man group as he laughed coldly.

"Very good, it is really unexpected that you all actually have the guts to appear." Seeing Xiao Yan nodding his head, that long-haired young man slowly took a step forward. Powerful Dou Qi surged out from within his body. With a wave of his hand, four human figures flashed over from behind him. They immediately landed around this long-haired young man in an orderly manner. It may appear that they were randomly standing around, but it was quite ingenious. This formation would allow them to react to any attack from any direction at anytime.

"Hand over the 'Fire Energy'? Or shall we take it by ourselves?" When the five man formation was formed, the long-haired youth's confidence greatly soared. He lifted his head and slowly spoke to Xiao Yan.

"These words... can you let me say them?" Xiao Yan laughed softly. He eyed the dark and solemn expression that was instantly formed on the long-haired young man's face and a coldness flashed across his dark eyes. His body shook a little and appeared at a spot two meters in front of the long-haired young man in a lightning-like manner. He tightened his fist and a green-colored Dou Qi swiftly surfaced. Finally, it solidified into a green-colored layer with spikes protruding from his fist. Following its appearance, the strength on Xiao Yan's fist suddenly soared greatly.

"Presumptuous fellow!"

The long-haired young man laughed as he coldly eyed Xiao Yan, who was attacking by himself. Before he even spoke, his four other companions flashed out at the same time. The short few steps that distanced them was instantly covered, and four pairs of fists and legs, each carrying a low sonic boom from cutting through the air, violently smashed toward Xiao Yan at the same time. They wanted to rely on their great cooperation and teamwork, using four people's strength to injure Xiao Yan with one blow!

Four older students, who were not much weaker than Xiao Yan, attacked

at the same time. That force was something that even Xiao Yan would have difficulty receiving directly. However, he simply ignored the attack of these four people. His eyes stared intently at that long-haired young man behind the shadows of the fists. The green-colored Dou Qi became increasingly concentrated on his fist.

Just as the fists and legs, containing ferocious force, were about to reach Xiao Yan's body, the sharp sound of rushing wind suddenly tore through the air. Human figures flashed past like light. Immediately, everyone was dazzled for a moment, only to see four black shadows descending from the sky like a metal tower and landed exactly around Xiao Yan. An attack which had already been brewed to perfection was suddenly emitted. In an instant, under repeated low explosive sounds, they heavily collided with the four older students. Energy ripples spread out from the points of collision. The thick, withered carpet of leaves on the ground took flight with a 'shua' sound, turning the leaves into a rain that fluttered through the air.

"Glug!"

The fists and legs of the four older students were blocked by Xun Er, Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia, who had suddenly appeared. The powerful force caused the former's bodies to tremble slightly. An instant later, they finally could no longer withstand the powerful force that was swiftly being transmitted over. Their faces turned red. Mouthfuls of fresh blood were spat out wildly while their bodies shot backward like falling leaves in the autumn wind. Finally they sat down on a pile of withered leaves. Their faces were filled with shock.

The moment when the bodies of the four older students fell back, a black shadow immediately followed up. With a flash, he appeared like a ghost in front of the long-haired young man, whose expression had changed drastically. He smiled at the latter as his hand shook. The fist, that was wrapped in a layer of green energy that contained spikes, smashed through defense of his crossed arms that the latter had placed in front of his head and heavily smashed into his shoulders. A force immediately exploded out and one could hear a clear 'crack' sound. The

long-haired young man's body fell and shot back. His feet dragged against the ground, leaving a long scar. Finally, he collided with a tree trunk. A muffled sound appeared and fresh blood flowed out from the corner of his mouth. The long-haired young man rubbed away the blood trace with his hand and he lowered his pale-white face, which was filled with disbelief. Didn't people say that this group of new students had strong individual strength but the coordination between them was extremely appalling? Why was it that... in just two short days, the cooperation that they displayed was already strong to such an extent?

The five new students, who stood in the middle of the empty ground, were stunned as they saw that the victor among the two groups was decided in a mere exchange. They then looked at the black-robed young man, who was twisting his fist while standing tall as well as the four others beside him. It was a long while later before they inhaled a deep breath of cool air. After these five people formed a group, their combat strength had actually become this strong.

Chapter 443: Grand Retaliation

“Chi!”

Xiao Yan smiled a little as he eyed the glow that was emitted from the two Fire Crystal Cards as they were rubbed together. He also smiled at the number on the dark, black crystal card, which had jumped up once more. Currently, his Fire Crystal Card stored a full seventy-four days worth of ‘Fire Energy’ within it. If he were to count, it appeared that this amount of ‘Fire Energy’ was sufficient for him to train for over two months in the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower.’ This could be considered a plentiful harvest.

“Adding this group, we should have collected from five groups by now.” Xun Er returned her crystal card properly. She took one glance at the five people, who were tied to the tree trunk after they were knocked out and continued happily, “Other than the two groups known as the ‘Black White Evil Stopper’, we can still snatch from the other three groups.”

“It a pity that this forest is so large. It might become difficult to locate the last three groups within it. Once we expose our whereabouts, it is likely that those groups will all hurry over to surround and cut us off. Although our cooperation is much better after those two days of special training, we can only handle one group at a time. Two groups would be our limit. If there were three, we would definitely be defeated.” Hu Jia voiced her thoughts.

Xiao Yan frowned slightly. A moment later, his gaze swept across the five new students, who were still standing in the middle of the empty ground, in a stunned state. His heart suddenly moved as he slowly said, “Currently, there are only three older student groups, not including the ‘Black White Evil Stopper,’ who still have the qualifications to participate in this Hunting Competition. In other words, there are still fifteen people. Yet, us new students don’t have the restriction where we lose qualification to participate if our ‘Fire Energy’ is less than ten. Therefore, I think that there should be quite a lot of new students who are still wandering around within this forest, right? After all, this forest is too big. They don’t have a

route to follow, so they would have great difficulty successfully leaving the forest within such a short time.”

“What do you plan to do?” The four of them were startled when they heard Xiao Yan’s words. Bai Shan knit his eyebrows and asked.

“Gather all the new students together. After that, let news slip to attract the other three groups. Use the strength of all the new students to finish them off altogether. What do you think?” Xiao Yan said faintly.

“Attract all of them over? That means all three groups will be attacking us. What if the other new students are unable to successfully block them? Won’t this be similar to a goat entering the tiger’s lair?” Bai Shan’s expression immediately changed a little when he heard this extremely bold suggestion from Xiao Yan. They needed to use tacit cooperation in order to just defeat one group. If it were three groups, the one who would lose would definitely be them. He did not want to give the ‘Fire Energy,’ which he had snatched with great difficulty, to someone else.

TL; a goat entering the tiger’s lair – seek death

“That may not be true. If there is a sufficiently large number of new students, we will definitely be able to gain the advantage. Don’t look down on the other new students. Their strength is definitely not weak if they are able to enter the top fifty. It is just due to the lack of cooperation between them that they collapse after receiving a single blow from the older students.” Xiao Yan shook his head and replied.

“Moreover, we cannot continue to drag things out like this. Finding an opportunity to finish all of them off in one go would save us a lot of trouble. Don’t you all want to quickly head to the Inner Academy and witness this ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower?’” Xiao Yan spread his hands and questioned.

“Ah, we have already spent three or four days within this forest. It is not a solution to continue dragging it out.” Wu Hao nodded and replied in a deep voice.

“I’m fine with anything. At the very most, we will just have to return the ‘Fire Energy’ that we’ve obtained.” Hu Jia curled her lips. She faced Xiao

Yan and said, "Now, you are already the group leader. You can just decide on these matters alone. There is no need to be overly sensitive."

Xiao Yan helplessly shook his head when he heard this. This action of his, to obtain opinions from his companions, had been criticized as being overly sensitive.

"Ah, alright. I will listen to you once more. Hopefully, you don't ruin it." Seeing that Wu Hao and Hu Jia did not have any objections, Bai Shan could only nod his head. He clearly knew that in this group, Xiao Yan already had credibility that caused Hu Jia and Wu Hao to be convinced in their hearts after these two days of fighting together. Moreover, Xun Er always agreed with everything that he said. Therefore, Bai Shan's words were basically something that was dispensable in this group. Who let him be in a position where he had few supporters?

Seeing that the opinions were once again unanimous, Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. He mused for a moment before suddenly turning toward the other five students. With a smile, he walked over and flipped his palm. A couple of healing medicines appeared in his hand, which he then handed over. "Are you guys alright?"

"Senior Xiao Yan, thank you very much for lending us a hand. Otherwise, I'm afraid that we wouldn't have been able to escape from being beaten into pig heads today." A young man, who appeared to be the leader, spoke with a face filled with gratitude. He was somewhat excited when he received the healing medicine, which Xiao Yan handed over.

"Ke ke, we are all new students. We ought to support one another." Xiao Yan laughed indifferently. His gaze stared at them as he suddenly asked, "Do you want to help us retaliate against those fellows?"

The five new students were startled when they heard this. They naturally understood that the 'those fellows' that Xiao Yan had just mentioned referred to the older students from the Inner Academy that were participating in the Hunting Competition. After hesitating for a moment, they grit their teeth and nodded. During these past two days, they had endured quite a lot of those fellows hopelessly stupid anger, but they only

dared to be angry and did not dare to say anything due to the difference in their strength.

“Since that is the case, I would like you all to help me with something.” Xiao Yan smiled and said softly.

“Senior Xiao Yan has rescued us once, just tell us what needs to be done.” When he heard Xiao Yan’s words, a young man hurriedly pounded his chest and basically agreed without any hesitation. His companions beside him also nodded with faces that were filled with excitement.

Seeing that this small group of people had agreed in such a straightforward manner, Xiao Yan was also startled. Perhaps even he himself did not know how deep of an impression he had left within this batch of new students when he lead his group to hunt down the older students. Most of the current new students already viewed Xiao Yan as an idol which they worshipped within their hearts. It was not for any other reason besides him having the strength and courage to contend against those older students who had bullied them.

“Ke ke, in that case, thank you very much... It’s like this, I want to ask you to try your best to spread out and search for other new students within the forest. After which, tell them that if they want to regain all the ‘Fire Energy’ that they have lost and that if they trust me, they can all gather at this place. I will lead them in a ruthless battle against those arrogant Inner Academy students!” Xiao Yan cupped his hands toward them and asked softly, “May I know if the few of you will agree?”

“Alright! Coincidentally, we are communicating with some of the new students. As they were worried of being captured by the older students, many of them have already hidden themselves.” A fiery heat swarmed on the five new students face. They had been led by Xiao Yan’s words until their hot blood was boiling. After so many days of being bullied and suppressed, they were now finally able to retaliate. How could they not be excited?

“Yes, the few of you should take advantage of this opportunity. Additionally, if you were to meet the older student groups alone during the

journey, you should first hand over your 'Fire Energy' to them. I, Xiao Yan, will compensate the 'Fire Energy' which you have lost after this is over." Xiao Yan sighed in his heart as he reminded these five people.

The five new students nodded their heads when they heard this. They immediately cupped their hands toward Xiao Yan and said, "Senior Xiao Yan can just wait for us to bring the other new students over. As long as you are leading us, we dare to follow you to retaliate against those bastards."

Once they said that, the five of them swiftly separated. Under Xiao Yan's focus, they swiftly entered into the dense forest and disappeared between the moving tree leaves.

"Hee hee, it's settled. Next, let's wait for the rest of the new students to gather. Once everyone has been gathered, our absolute grand retaliation will begin!" Xiao Yan stood up, turned around and smiled as he spoke to Xun Er and the three others.

Perhaps it was because they had the hope of retaliating against the older students of the Inner Academy, but the efficiency of the five new students was so outstanding that it caused Xiao Yan to be somewhat astonished. In merely one morning, there were new students carefully appearing around this clearing one after another. Only when they saw that the the ones seated cross-legged between the trees and resting were Xiao Yan's five man group were they completely convinced. After which, human figures began to flash within the quiet forest. One by one, miserable-looking figures landed and entered into this empty space. When their gazes swept across the five older students, who were tied to a tree trunk by Xiao Yan, the hatred which had accumulated in their hearts for two to three days finally began to ease up.

These new students agglomerated here from various locations and were extremely conscious, not daring to interrupt Xiao Yan's five man group, who were training with their eyes closed. One by one, they formed a circular shape, surrounding Xiao Yan's five men group.

As time passed, more and more new students came flashing out

successively from the dense forest toward this empty ground. Their gazes involuntarily gathered on the black-robed young man in the middle of the encirclement, carrying a faint heated worshipful feeling within them.

At a certain instance, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes shut, finally opened them slowly. He eyed the the surrounding new students, who were seated cross-legged in an orderly manner around him with sparkling eyes. A gratified smile surfaced on his face. This number did not disappoint him.

“Everyone, do you want to return the grievances that you endured these past two days due to those self-righteous Inner Academy’s older students?” Xiao Yan slowly released his pent up breath and his voice suddenly sounded among the trees.

“Yes!” Orderly low furious voices shook the tree leaves on the trees around them.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly as he eyed the fury and resentment that swarmed onto the faces of the new students. What he wanted was this fury that had agglomerated into anger!

The tree branches between the trees suddenly moved. Two or three human figures flashed out. There were instantly dozens of gazes jumping over from the open ground.

“Senior Xiao Yan, we did as you asked and exposed our position to the other three groups. Now, they are likely hurrying to this place!”

“Good.”

Xiao Yan clapped his hands together heavily. He suddenly stood up and his gaze looked around at the new students, whose eyes were filled with fury, despite their miserable appearance. In a deep voice, he said, “Everyone, hide yourselves properly. Today, we will give those haughty older students a ruthless slap!”

As Xiao Yan’s voice fell, nearly forty students immediately began entering the dense brush around them in an agile manner. In just the blink of an eye, the originally crowded open ground had once again become empty.

“Everyone, prepare yourselves. We need to finish them off in one blow.”
Xiao Yan smiled and reminded Xun Er and the three others.

“Yes!”

On top of a huge tree somewhere in the dense forest, two old men were sitting cross-legged there with open eyes. They looked at one another. A soft laughter slowly reverberated through the air.

“Hee hee, it’s going to get lively now!”

Chapter 444: The Fight Between The Strong

Xiao Yan's group of five sat cross-legged with their eyes shut on the empty forest ground. The entire forest descended into silence. However, that somewhat-pressuring low yet deep atmosphere indicated that there was going to be a storm arriving in this place.

The silence continued for an unknown length of time. At a certain moment, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes tightly shut, suddenly opened them. His gaze suddenly swept towards the north side of the forest. More than ten powerful Qis had already appeared within the range of his Spiritual Perception from that location.

"They are coming." Xiao Yan let out a gentle breath. He twisted his body, and the vortex in his body trembled slightly. Threads of Dou Qi came flowing out. Finally, it became like a flood that was galloping and circulating through his Qi Paths. The feeling of being filled with strength caused Xiao Yan's condition to rise to the peak, just before the arrival of this big battle!

Hearing Xiao Yan's soft words, Xun Er and the four others beside him also opened their eyes. They nodded slightly and a faint Dou Qi glow began to become partially visible on the surface of their bodies, waiting for the big fight that was imminent.

Not long after Xiao Yan spoke, some brushes in the distance suddenly shifted a little. More than ten shadows immediately flashed out and their feet landed heavily on the empty plot of land almost simultaneously. Like ocean waves, powerful Qis immediately swept over Xiao Yan's five man group, who were seated cross-legged.

"Bang!"

Just as the oppressive aura entered a five meters radius from Xiao Yan's five man group, five, different colored, powerful Qis suddenly erupted from within their bodies, turning into a bright curtain of Dou Qi that

lingered in the air above them, completely blocking the rampaging aura.

“They do indeed have some skill. No wonder they dare to be so arrogant.” Seeing that their oppressive force was nullified, a look of surprise flashed across the face of a young man who wore a smile and blandly said.

Xiao Yan slowly lifted his head. His gaze swept across the ten plus young men on the other side of the open clearing. He counted carefully. There were exactly fifteen people. In other words, other than the ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ groups, the last three groups in this Hunting Competition had arrived.

“Very good...” Xiao Yan nodded his head gently. His voice carried a little laughter that resounded throughout the empty ground: “Finally, all of you have arrived.”

“Your arrogance ends right now. Hand over the Fire Crystal Cards.” A young man, whose hair was slightly white, perhaps as a result of some reason, glanced at Xiao Yan’s five man group. He coldly said: “Don’t think that just because you have some strength you can break the rules. In so many years, the rules of the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ was to let the older students give you arrogant new students a blow within this forest. This is beneficial to your Inner Academy life in the future... this rule had persisted for many years. No one can break it. If you want to become the first people who do so, you might have to prepare yourselves to pay the price for it.”

Xiao Yan laughed. He grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand. A black shadow immediately flashed passed. The heavy ruler carried a tyrannical force which blew the withered leaves on the ground until they drifted apart. He glanced at the three groups in front of him and said: “Don’t tell me about those antiquated rules. Since you can snatch the ‘Fire Energy’ in our hands, why aren’t we allowed to do the same? As long as you have strength, the position of the hunted and the hunter can change anytime. Currently, you are all our prey.”

“Very presumptuous. However, I have also seen quite a number of

people like this in the past. However, they did not fare very well upon arrival in the Inner Academy.” A young man with a huge build coldly laughed. Looking at the position where he stood, he appeared to be the leader of one of the groups. His skin was strangely a grayish-white, appearing like rock. His arm, which was nearly double the size of an ordinary person’s also appeared to have a feeling of great strength. Clearly, this young person should be the kind of person whose physical strength was extremely high.

“I admit that you are all quite strong. However, for the sake of the face of the older students, we do not plan to have a fair fight this time around.” A young man who had a smile plastered on his face shrugged. After which, he smilingly said towards the two young men who had spoken earlier: “Leng Bai, Xiu Yan, let’s attack together. From the looks of their Qis, it might be quite difficult for us to obtain victory within a short time with just my group.”

“Yes.”

The two young men known as Leng Bai and Xiu Yan, hesitated for a moment before nodding their heads. Even if they ended up with a reputation of relying on more people to bully a smaller group, they must completely suppress these arrogant new students. Otherwise, once the news of these new students robbing the older students spread throughout the Inner Academy, the older students who participated in this ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ would have difficulty raising their heads in the Inner Academy.

As the two of them nodded, fifteen powerful Qis suddenly erupted from the area. Their aura turned into energy ripples that directly blew the withered leaves off the ground until they danced in the sky.

“Sorry, but actually, we did not intend to fight fairly either.” Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and watched the somewhat eye-piercing Dou Qi glow on the other side. He smiled and immediately waved his hand. Following which, a sharp whistle was emitted from his mouth and resounded through this section of the forest.

“Shua! Shua!”

Xiao Yan's whistle had just sounded when dozens of human figures suddenly flashed out from the surrounding dense thicket. Finally, they formed a circle and surrounded the fifteen older students in the middle. Various colored Dou Qi agglomerated on the surface of their bodies. Although their individual strength could not be considered close to that of the fifteen older students, having dozens of Dou Qi appearing at the same time immediately caused their force to become the stronger one present!

The moment the dozens of human figures appeared, the expressions of the three group leaders suddenly became gruesome. At this very moment, they had finally understood what happened. Immediately, the expression of the smiling young man became somewhat dark and solemn as he said: “I'm afraid that the news earlier was something that you allowed to be leaked, right?”

As he sensed the powerful force that erupted from over forty new students, Xiao Yan heaved a long sigh of relief in his heart. With the help of these new students, he had absolute confidence that he could completely decimate these three groups.

“Good tactics. It is just that I did not expect that you would have the boldness and resolution to actually gather all the new students together.” When Xiao Yan did not reply, it naturally meant that he admitted to it silently. Seeing this, an additional seriousness and shock could not help but appear in that young man's voice. During the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competitions’ in the past, there was no lack of new students who wanted to gather all their strengths together and retaliate against the thieving older students. However, which of these students could pass through the Qualifying Competition and enter the Inner Academy did not belong to the top of their own class? They were naturally extremely unwilling to listen to someone else's commands. Hence, very seldom would there be any one who could successfully gather all the new students together in the past ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’. Yet, Xiao Yan had successfully done so. It was no wonder that this older student would lose himself.

“You overpraise me.” Xiao Yan smiled faintly. He slowly lifted the heavy

ruler in his hand and smilingly said: "I would like to trouble you to hand over your 'Fire Energy'. Many of us, these new students have been robbed by you. Therefore, they need to take back what is rightfully theirs."

"Ugh..." The same young man sighed once again. He turned his head to face the other two group leaders, Leng Bai and Xiu Yan, and said: "Looks like there is going to be a bitter battle today. From the looks of it, we can only work together."

"Yes. I was coincidentally thinking of trying out just how strong the top five new students were." The large built Xiu Yan slowly clenched his fist. As his hand curved, his steel-like muscles flexed slightly giving off a feeling of him releasing strength.

"To capture a thief, one must first capture their king. Although there are many new students, their courage is merely built on the person called Xiao Yan. Once we defeat him, this coalition of new student will naturally collapse. Su Xiao, looks like the three of us will have to cooperate." A glint flashed in Leng Bai's eyes as he managed to identify the weakness of the new students with a single glance.

"Since that is the case, then let's allow the strong to face off against the strong and forcefully tear apart their barrier."

Hearing this, the young man called Su Xiao smiled and immediately waved his hand gently. His voice was slowly emitted: "Leng Bai, Xiu Yan, and I will stop the three people in front of us. The others should block the new students and the two beautiful girls on the opposite sides."

The twelve Inner Academy's older students nodded their heads upon hearing Su Xiao words. Although there were a large number of new students, these new students were much weaker than them. It should not pose too much of a problem to block them.

"Hu..." Su Xiao let out a long breath and slowly took a step forward. Leng Bai and Xiu Yan similarly took a step forward to stand beside him. The ground trembled slightly when their feet landed on it. The force of the three of them, which was around that of a six star Da Dou Shi, abruptly surged out from within their bodies and swept over the entire empty

ground.

“Each of you will take one. This is a tough battle. The men will face them... Xun Er, you and Hu Jia should help the new students hold off the attacks of the twelve older students.” Xiao Yan’s expression solidified as he eyed the force that was emitted from the bodies of Su Xiao and the two others. He turned his head and spoke to Xun Er.

“Yes. Be careful, Xiao Yan ge-ge.” Xun Er nodded gently as she and Hu Jia slowly stepped back. Finally, their bodies flashed as they merged into the new student group.

“Leave that big fellow to me.” Wu Hao’s gaze swept over the three of them. Finally, it stopped on the grayish-white skinned young man and spoke calmly. He specialized in strength and speed. Therefore, when he chose his opponent, it would naturally tend to be people who were of the physical strength type.

“Leave that white haired fellow to me.” Bai Shan hesitated a little before his gaze paused on Leng Bai.

“In that case, I will be seeking advice from Senior Su Xiao.” Xiao Yan smiled. He waved his heavy ruler and the sound of wind tearing caused all the withered leaves on the ground around him to drift away.

“Ah, it is very expected that we would be actually arranged and chosen by others.” Seeing the action of Xiao Yan’s three men group, Su Xiao laughed. He raised his hand slowly and immediately pulled it down. His laughter contained additional killing intent: “Let’s fight and finish this quickly! Remember, do not look down on these fellows even a little bit. They are all very strong!”

“Yes.”

Leng Bai and Xiu Yan nodded with serious expressions. Just as the sound was emitted from their noses, the three figures started moving like lightning at almost the same time. They turned into flashes of light and shot explosively towards Xiao Yan and the other two!

At the moment that Su Xiao and the other two moved, Xiao Yan’s three

man group also disappeared from the spot with a 'shua' sound. The next time they appeared, six human figures were already in the middle of the empty ground. As the strong began to fight, powerful blows were thrown!

Chapter 445: The Start of The Big Fight

“Bang!”

Six human figures tore through the hinderance of the air in a lightning-like manner in the forest clearing. In an instant, they collided in the center and Dou Qi surged out like an erupting volcano, permeating through the air. As the Dou Qi collided, they formed a strong Dou Qi wind that shattered all the withered leaves on the ground!

Xiao Yan’s opponent was the young man called Su Xiao. His physique was perhaps the most delicate and weakest among the three group leaders. However, from the discussion earlier, Xiao Yan knew that this fellow should be a little stronger than the other two people. Otherwise, with the haughtiness that Leng Bai and Xiu Yan displayed, they would not pay much attention to his words. However, the two of them did not disagree with the various suggestions of Su Xiao just now. It was like Su Xiao was their leader.

“Chi!”

The large Heavy Xuan Ruler cut through the air as it carried a cluster of black shadows and immense crushing winds like a large mountain pressing down as it smashed heavily down toward Su Xiao, who had appeared in front of him.

The enormous ruler was merely half a foot from Su Xiao’s head when the latter’s body gently drifted one step back like a leaf being lifted by a gentle breeze. The enormous ruler merely carried its force past Su Xiao’s body by about half an inch. The wind that was contained in it blew Su Xiao’s hair until all of it was lifted.

“Very great strength.” Su Xiao smiled and said after narrowly avoiding the attack from Xiao Yan’s heavy ruler. His feet immediately pressed against the ground, and his body appeared as though it was weightless as he suddenly charged forward. He deceptively approached close to Xiao Yan in an instant, and two dark daggers that were around two inches long shot into Su Xiao’s hands from his sleeves. Immediately, his hands danced

like a windmill as the dark daggers quietly carried numerous afterimages and a faint rotating wind around their tips. They stabbed in a wild, dazzling manner directly at Xiao Yan's body.

Su Xiao's attack where he waved his two daggers had a speed that was quite shocking. In terms of attacking speed, Xiao Yan admitted that he would not be able to achieve such speeds. He may be unable to achieve such speed, but it was not too difficult to defend against. The size of the Heavy Xuan Ruler may be big and heavy, but it similarly had an advantage that was difficult to conceal.

When the heavy ruler was pulled back, it would appear in front of Xiao Yan like a shield. All of those nearly endless dagger attacks of Su Xiao landed on the ruler's blade. One could only hear continuous 'clang' sounds and see sparks flying in all directions. In just a couple of breaths' time, Su Xiao had waved his dagger nearly twenty to thirty times in a somewhat crazed and wild manner. However, these swift and violent lightning-like dagger attacks were completely useless against Xiao Yan's impenetrable heavy ruler defense!

From the faint rotating wind shrouding Su Xiao, it appeared that the Dou Qi he practiced belonged to the fast and agile wind affinity. Therefore, his speed and agility were truly shocking. After seeing that his wave of violent attacks were unsuccessful, Su Xiao did not withdraw because of it. Instead, he relied on his drifting, leaf-like agility, and repeatedly flashed around Xiao Yan. The dagger on his hand would occasionally draw a cold arc as it shot explosively toward the occasional gaps which Xiao Yan revealed. In his heart, he clearly knew that the heavy ruler in Xiao Yan's hand held great lethality. If he allowed the opponent to pull apart the gap between them and use it, it would pose an extremely great threat to him. Hence, he could not afford to give Xiao Yan any opportunity to use his ruler to its maximum capabilities.

If he wanted to fight, he needed to suppress his opponent until the latter had no means of retaliating! When he fought with others in the Inner Academy, Su Xiao relied on his agility and attack speed, which he was proud of, to suppress his challengers until the latter was at a huge

disadvantage before the latter could completely display their strength!

“The strength of a six star Da Dou Shi... The students in the Inner Academy are indeed very strong!” Xiao Yan’s body occasionally moved slightly. The heavy ruler in his hand was like a shield, repeatedly moving and flashing about all around his body. His peripheral vision repeatedly swept around him. Although Su Xiao’s attack speed and agility was somewhat beyond his expectations, for Xiao Yan who had Spiritual Perception to act as his eyes, he would be able to absorb everything within his field of vision almost instantly, regardless of when the opponent attacked. After which, he would adopt defensive and counter-attack measures. Therefore, it may appear that Su Xiao was violently attacking in the battleground, but he did not pose even the slightest bit of a threat to Xiao Yan.

On the other hand, Xiao Yan had already roughly grasped Su Xiao’s strength during their contact earlier. He could not help but be amazed in his heart. Su Xiao’s age was perhaps merely around twenty-five years. Although this kind of training speed did still have some gap when compared with himself, it could be said that it was quite remarkable to possess this kind of strength at that age. Back then, when Xiao Yan was in the Jia Ma Empire, the strongest Da Dou Shis he had met, with the exception of Nalan Yanran, were mostly people who had stepped into their middle-aged years. Moreover, Xiao Yan’s father, Xiao Zhan, was included among them. From this, it was evident that with Su Xiao’s achievements, he was likely called a genius regardless of where he was placed in the Jia Ma Empire. However, a genius of this class was not considered to be rare within the Inner Academy.

“It is indeed where the core of the Jia Nan Academy lies. This Inner Academy is really causing my curiosity to grow...” Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. He waved his hand and the heavy ruler abruptly swung toward the back. Finally, it deflected aside two daggers which had pierced over in a lightning-like manner.

At this moment when a fierce battle had begun where Xiao Yan was at, the other places had also suddenly entered into battles that would cause

people's heated blood to boil. In an instant, roaring sounds, the sound of swords and knives colliding, and the explosion of Dou Qi repeatedly appeared in the originally quiet and empty forest. It was like a firecracker, appearing extremely lively.

Faced with Leng Bai, whose strength was similar to his own, Bai Shan did not dare to slight the former by even a little. The long, silver-colored lance in his hands was like a giant lightning python. As it swung abruptly and violently, lightning cut through the air and carried a 'chi chi' sound, which was extremely frightening.

That Leng Bai was quite surprised by the strength which Bai Shan displayed. His expression gradually became serious. His hand held an extremely large knife with a cold glint. The cold aura was sharp as he hacked down and pulled it up. Occasionally, when the blade cut past Bai Shan's clothes, it would cause some red dots to rise up on his skin.

Compared to Xiao Yan's and Bai Shan's fights, Wu Hao's one was the one which caused people's heart to be gripped with fear. The young man called Xiu Yan did not use any weapons. However, during battle, there was a grayish-white Dou Qi shrouding his entire body. Under the cover of this Dou Qi, his originally grayish-white skin had turned into something like a mountain rock, giving people an extremely eye-piercing view of rigid strength. As he waved both his enormous fists, they were like rocks flying past. If it was a timid person, it was likely that he would not dare to recklessly fight head on with Xiu Yan.

Xiu Yan's attack completely belonged to the pure force type, which completely lacked any tricks. If it was another person fighting with him, the opponent might perhaps adopt an evasive fighting style to combat him. Wu Hao, however, was different. Seeing the heavy blood-colored sword that he used, which was similar to Xiao Yan's heavy ruler, his strength was also terrifying. This was indeed the case. When faced with Xiu Yan's hard attacks, he did not even take half a step back. Blood-colored Dou Qi unceasingly surged out from within his body. He immediately waved his heavy fists, carrying a soft and low explosive sound, as he repeatedly caused head-on collisions with Xiu Yan.

This stance of his where he did not evade also caused Xiu Yan to feel more comfortable the more they fought. When he fought with people within the Inner Academy, there was seldom anyone who would fight with him in this manner. Immediately, he could not resist the pleasant feeling within his heart as he faced the sky and laughed loudly. He might have been laughing but the whirling smashes of his fist had not weakened even a little because of this. Instead, the attacks had become increasingly sharp. The 'hu hu' sound of the wind from his fists shook people until their eardrums ached. Within half a meter radius of him, any drifting withered leaves that came into contact with his fist would be shattered into a pile of powder.

On the open empty grounds, intense energy explosions were repeatedly emitting from the three battlegrounds. Six human figures were like glue as they adhered to one another. Their underlying strength was like blades. When they were occasionally revealed, they would cut the trees surrounding them into two, right down the middle!

Outside these three battles, the most lively area naturally belonged to the place where the group of new students were fighting with those twelve older students. Multi-colored Dou Qis stained the battlefield until it appeared very colorful and extremely gorgeous.

In this chaotic battle circle, the new students might have greater numbers but they were disadvantaged in that they did not have good cooperation or teamwork. On the other hand, the twelve older students in the Inner Academy not only had individual strength that far surpassed the new students, but also a degree of cooperation that was far from what the new students could hope to compare with. Hence, after this battle had begun, there would occasionally be new students who were sent flying from this battle circle. However, the disadvantage of the new students began to gradually turn around with the participation of Xun Er and Hu Jia. This was because with a cornerstone, the new students' attacks gradually became orderly. Finally, Xun Er and Hu Jia each brought some new students as they cut the metal drum defence of the twelve older students like two sharp knives, spreading apart the twelve men group

which was hugged close together and gradually swallowed them up.

It must be said that the effect Xun Er and Hu Jia had achieved was extremely important. After the other party's defensive circle was torn apart, the older students finally began to panic. In merely seven to eight minutes, there were two to three older students who were heavily knocked out of the battle circle after their bodies received more than ten fists and legs at the same time. After which, they threw up blood and collapsed.

The entire battlefield had gradually turned white-hot at this moment. The degree of brutality of the battle also caused people to be somewhat stunned. Other than not having caused any deaths, there were quite a number of people, who due to their reddened eyes, had beaten their opponents until the latter was seriously wounded. Among them were both new students and older students.

In summary, the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' this year would likely shake the entire Inner Academy. This was because this was the first time in the last ten years where the new students participating in the Hunting Competition had pressured the older students to such an extent.

As the fight in the battleground entered this white-hot phase, a change finally began to occur in Xiao Yan's battleground.

After exchanging blows for over ten minutes, Xiao Yan could be considered to have completely grasped Su Xiao's attack patterns. Following this, it was time for the latter's wild storm-like attacks to cease.

Xiao Yan's hand held the heavy ruler tightly. He let out a low cry as his body began to swiftly spin like a gyro. The enormous black and dark shadow carried a frightening wind that covered the region within a two meter radius from his body.

"Clang!" Xiao Yan's sudden change from defense was also beyond Su Xiao's expectations. He swiftly pulled his body back as his hand pressed a dagger into the ruler's body in an extremely skillful manner, using the force to push his body into the air.

Seeing Su Xiao leap back, the corner of Xiao Yan's mouth lifted into a cold smile. The heavy ruler in his hand was abruptly inserted into the

ground and his hands quickly formed some seals. An instant later, his head tilted back a little, while his mouth formed a convex shaped and instantly opened in a sudden manner. Immediately, a tiger's roar that contained a strange sound wave was emitted from Xiao Yan's mouth.

The roar had just come out from Xiao Yan's mouth when Su Xiao, who was facing him on the opposite side, suddenly felt an explosive, thunder-like rumbling within his mind. In an instant, Su Xiao's mind sank to a giddy and faint state.

'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar'! This was the sonic Dou Technique which Xiao Yan had practiced just before his trip to enter the Inner Academy. Now that he had displayed it for the first time, he obtained an effect that caused him to rejoice!

Although Su Xiao's giddiness last for merely an instant, this instant would determine the victor in the battle between the strong!

Chapter 446: Temporary Victor

As the momentary giddiness in his mind disappeared like lightning, the heart of Su Xiao, who had recovered, immediately tightened a little. He clearly knew just what kind of a price he would have to pay for being absent-minded at such a moment.

His expectations were not wrong. With Xiao Yan's eyesight, how would he easily abandon this kind of opening? Therefore, the instant Su Xiao recovered, Xiao Yan's feet stepped off the ground and a clear energy explosion sounded from beneath him. The energy attack waves directly shook the ground until a hole, around half an inch deep was formed. Xiao Yan borrowed the powerful and violent shooting strength as his body became like a ghost, appearing above Su Xiao's head in a single breath. He tightened his fist. Without any tricks, he used this incomparably powerful Dou Qi and strength as his fist ruthlessly smashed toward Su Xiao's head.

The fist, which was usually not very large, was like the fist of a giant at this moment. The force contained on it directly cut through the air. A sharp rushing wind sound and a deep low sonic boom merged together. It appeared to have exploded within people's hearts, causing people to be unable to endure the fear that rose in them due to the frightening power, resulting in them being afraid to put up defenses.

This fearful feeling within Su Xiao's heart lasted for merely an instant before it was forcefully tossed out of his heart. Faced with this swift and violent thunderclap-like attack, he could only swiftly circulate the Dou Qi in his body in haste. Finally, a pale-green Dou Qi Armor appeared on his body with a bright glow. His head was immediately tilted back as he forcefully avoided his vital points.

The fist, covered with green-colored Dou Qi, was affixed to Su Xiao's front, and finally heavily smashed against his chest. The Dou Qi was momentarily silent before it unleashed an extremely powerful strength like a volcano erupting as Xiao Yan let out a low cry within his heart.

"Octane Blast!"

The low and deep cry accompanied the frightening force that had caused Su Xiao's expression to change greatly. The force was like an overflowing surge of flood water, completely smashing down on the firm armor that protected the latter's body!

Immediately, a green-colored energy ripple abruptly formed a circular shape as it spread turbulently out from the point of contact between the two. Most of trees in the dense forest at the side were severed horizontally while being engulfed by this energy ripple. The emerald green tree leaves were like green-colored rain covering this entire open forested area.

“Crack...”

Following the spread of the energy ripple, a clear cracking, ear-piercing sound suddenly sounded through the air. In the reflection of Su Xiao's shock-filled eyes, one could see that numerous crack lines were swiftly spreading through his hard Dou Qi Armor. In a mere second, the crack lines covered the entire armor. Finally, the Dou Qi Armor was overwhelmed. A cracking sound appeared as it shattered into glowing shards that floated into the sky. It was separated from Su Xiao's body, and quietly turned into nothingness.

With the final defense broken, the force on Xiao Yan's palm, which had not been completely resolved, firmly landed on Su Xiao's body. Under the erosion of his force, which was still strong and violent, a sleek redness swarmed onto Su Xiao's shocked face. A blood trace immediately spilled out from the corner of his mouth. A moment later, he finally could no longer resist the spreading of the force as a mouthful of bright red fresh blood was wildly spat out. His body also appeared to be like a bird which had lost its wings, powerlessly smashing down to the ground.

The fresh blood which had been spat out from Su Xiao's mouth evaporated into nothingness upon entering a one foot radius of Xiao Yan due to the high temperature exuded from his body. Xiao Yan's toes pressed off the empty air and his body rolled in the air before landing beside the Heavy Xuan Ruler. Only after he landed did the sound of a heavy object landing on the ground ring out. He tilted his head slightly and saw Su Xiao lying on a pile of withered leaves with a face that was

already pale. The shock in the latter's eyes still remained.

A person whose strength was around that of a five to six star Da Dou Shi had revealed a fatal opening under Xiao Yan's unexpected 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar.' Finally, he was completely defeated under Xiao Yan's thunderclap-like attack.

Xiao Yan shook his somewhat numb fist and once again grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly in his palm. His gaze carried an ice-coldness as it swept across the other battlegrounds, which were still in an extremely chaotic stalemate. His ice-cold voice suddenly spoke up, "Su Xiao has already been defeated. Do you still want to continue?"

The sudden cry sounded beside everyone's ears like exploding thunder. At this moment, the chaotic battlefield immediately turned quiet. Various sounds of knives and swords clashing also came to an abrupt halt at this moment. All the gazes followed the origin of these words and moved, finally stopping on Xiao Yan, who was holding a heavy ruler in his hand, as well as Su Xiao lying on the ground behind the former, unable to move.

"Su Xiao had actually lost?"

The two gazes which paused on Su Xiao's paper white face coincidentally belonged to Leng Bai and Xiu Yan who were facing Bai Shan and Wu Hao. Their expressions suddenly changed. It should be known that if they were to discuss who was the strongest among the three of them, Su Xiao was ranked at the top. However, no matter how they imagined the battle, they would never have thought that in this battle, Su Xiao would actually be the first to be defeated. Moreover, he was defeated in such a swift and straightforward manner.

"This fellow... is already strong to such an extent?" Shock surfaced in Leng Bai and Xiu Yan's eyes as their gazes swiftly turned from Su Xiao's body to Xiao Yan, who was holding the heavy ruler in his hand. Only now did they understand a little about why this young man, whose age seemed to be a little younger than most people on the battlefield, would actually have the courage and resolution to gather all the new students together. With this kind of strength, forget about the new students, even some of

the older students in the Inner Academy were likely no match for him.

“Group Leader?! Bastard, your attacks were actually so vicious! Brothers, let’s go all out against them. If we are to be defeated by a group of new students, how would we be able to survive in the Inner Academy in the future?” An angry shout suddenly sounded from within the quiet atmosphere of the battleground. Immediately, three human figures covered by Dou Qi suddenly shuttled out of the chaotic battleground and shot explosively toward Xiao Yan.

The cry which had suddenly appeared, broke the silence within the battleground. It also caused some fierce auras to swarm into the eyes of the older students. Reputation was extremely important within the Inner Academy. They did not want to end up with an embarrassing reputation. Otherwise, it would really be as the cry had said. How would they survive in the Inner Academy?

As the fierce auras surfaced, powerful Dou Qi once again surged out from the remaining older students. Finally, they fiercely pounced on the new students, who had suffered heavy losses. When they attacked, there was an additional ruthlessness!

Xiao Yan did not expect someone would pose a disturbance at the critical juncture after he had put in great pains to use the might of having defeated Su Xiao to quell the older students. Immediately, an anger appeared in his heart. He coldly watched these three figures who had shot explosively over. His hand suddenly released the Heavy Xuan Ruler as his feet stepped on the ground. His body charged forward instead of withdrawing and took the initiative to charge into an area surrounded by the three people as he shot forward. A shapeless force exploded out of his palm in all directions striking the three man formation until it was broken into pieces.

“Bai Shan, Wu Hao. Finish your battle quickly! Stop holding back!”

Green-colored Dou Qi enwrapped Xiao Yan’s entire body as he shouted out in a low voice. His body immediately flashed and appeared behind one of the older students like a ghost. His heavy palm was thrown out and

imprinted itself on the latter's shoulder in a lightning-like manner. The powerful force directly pushed the latter until he staggered. Finally, he became like a rolling gourd as he rolled a long distance away before he knocked into a tree trunk and fainted.

The current Xiao Yan undoubtedly displayed his usual strength to its peak form. Having separated from the restraints of the Heavy Xuan Ruler, his speed was as swift as a shadow. The other two Inner Academy's older students could merely rely on the tremors of the air around them to identify Xiao Yan's location. However, they were clearly not adept in using this ability to identify Xiao Yan's position. Therefore, in merely a couple of minutes, the two people received a few heavy punches. They continued to endure it in this manner for another four to five minutes before their bodies finally feebly collapsed and they temporarily lost their senses.

The strength of the three of them were around that of someone who had just entered the Da Dou Shi class. This strength could be considered among the top for an ordinary new student. However, in the face of Xiao Yan, a six star Da Dou Shi with extensive combat experience, it was not too difficult to finish them off. It was already extremely extraordinary for the three of them to rely on their cooperation to drag it out with Xiao Yan for quite a while.

Although the Xiao Yan's surface strength was around that of a six star Da Dou Shi, due to him carrying the extremely heavy Heavy Xuan Ruler for a long time, his speed, strength, and even endurance, far exceeded that of an ordinary six star Da Dou Shi. Moreover, after Xiao Yan was separated from the Heavy Xuan Ruler, even if he did not display any agility Dou Techniques, his speed would likely rival that of a seven or even eight star Da Dou Shi.

Of course, Xiao Yan did not possess that kind of Agility Dou Qi which could flash and dodge during combat. The Agility Dou Technique, which he had obtained long ago, did have a great assaulting force when traveling in a straight line. However, when it came to close combat, it was completely useless. Moreover, he had yet to practice the Di class Agility Dou Technique 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement.' Hence, Xiao Yan

had mostly relied on his own agility to contend with his opponents.

Even though this was the case, Xiao Yan still did not spend too much strength in defeating the three older students who had just entered the Da Dou Shi class.

During the ten minutes where Xiao Yan was entangled with those three older Inner Academy's students, the other three battlegrounds had also entered into the ending phase of the fight.

There was hardly any difference in Bai Shan's and Leng Bai's strength but it was clear that the Qi Method and Dou Techniques the former practiced were of a much higher grade than the latter. Although it was difficult to distinguish who was better when they started to fight initially, the benefits of a higher Qi Method gradually showed itself once the battle dragged on. The moment when Leng Bai's Dou Qi began to pale, Bai Shan was still filled with Dou Qi. After being entangled like this for another ten minutes, Bai Shan finally shook and pushed back the pale-faced Leng Bai after displaying the powerful attacking Dou Qi he had used when fighting with Xiao Yan in the Qualifying Competition.

The instant that Leng Bai withdrew, a long silver-colored lance broke through the air in a lightning-like manner. Finally, with a 'chi' sound, it stopped just in front of the latter's throat. Immediately, the latter's entire body stiffened as he raised his hands.

Seeing that Leng Bai chose to admit defeat, Bai Shan's throat rolled a little. His rapid breathing caused his chest to swiftly rise and fell. The beads of perspiration that dripped down from his face also indicated that he did not win this battle in a relaxed manner.

Chapter 447: The Fisherman Follows After the Fight Between The Sandpiper and The Mussels

TL: Title means that another enemy lurks behind as two groups fight in order to swoop in and capture/take advantage of the losses in both groups

The long lance that paused in front of Leng Bai was not withdrawn. The corner of Bai Shan's mouth was lifted in a pleased manner when he eyed the somewhat stiff face of his opponent. He turned his head slightly as he lifted his eyes and swept them toward Xiao Yan. When he saw Su Xiao and the three Inner Academy's older students who had fallen to the side, the pride on the corner of his mouth involuntarily gradually dimmed. Some coldness and envy could not help but flash through his eyes. The him, who had a haughty character, really did not like the feeling of being firmly suppressed by someone. At the Outer Academy in the past, he completely deserved being one of the most outstanding people there, receiving the respectful gazes of all the students. This type of treatment was suddenly broken apart after the appearance of Xiao Yan. This caused his chest, which was not very wide, to not feel even the slightest positive feeling toward Xiao Yan.

TL: Chest – Think of it as your tolerance to others

Although he had obtained quite a lot of benefits from following Xiao Yan during this entire journey, his heart firmly thought that this was merely because each of them held what the other required. Xiao Yan wanted nothing more than to borrow his strength to obtain the 'Fire Energy' from the other Inner Academy students to satisfy his desires. In Bai Shan's heart, he had never treated him as a true group leader. It was merely just using each other for what they required.

"However, the greatest victor in this exchange is still him..." Bai Shan's eyes swept over some of the new students. He could see respect and worship toward Xiao Yan from within their eyes. Clearly, the courage and

resolution Xiao Yan showed to fight against the older student groups had successfully won their support, which was expressed directly from their hearts.

“These bastards had completely forgotten that without us, Xiao Yan could never achieve this by himself!” Bai Shan clenched his teeth violently. The anger suppressed in his heart for a long time could not help but come gushing out now. As he became increasingly furious in his heart, his gaze suddenly become cold. He held the long lance tightly in his hand and took a step forward. The long lance smashed horizontally and immediately landed heavily on the chest of Leng Bai, who had already given up fighting and had no defense. The latter’s face immediately turned red and a mouthful of fresh blood came spitting out. He hurriedly took a couple of steps back and finally sat down on the ground. After which, he abruptly lifted his head while his eyes were filled with fury.

“What are you looking at? Not satisfied?” Bai Shan coldly laughed when he saw the fury in Leng Bai’s eyes. He took a step forward and was just about to once again vent the anger in his heart when a black shadow suddenly flashed past. Xiao Yan’s low and deep voice sounded, “He has already admitted defeat, why do you need to continue attacking? Is it glorious to injure a person who is defenseless?”

“Hmph.” Xiao Yan’s obstruction caused the long lance held in Bai Shan’s hand to tremble. He inhaled a deep breath of air and hid the anger within his heart. With a snort, he carried the long lance in his hand, turned around, and charged into the battleground between the new and older students. His long lance carried a ‘chi chi’ sound, appearing majestic just like a silver-colored giant python.

Xiao Yan frowned as he eyed Bai Shan leaving. He then glanced at the fight on Wu Hao’s side, which had also reached the ending phase. Only after seeing that the latter was about to win did Xiao Yan turn his head over and look at the furious face of Leng Bai. He waved his hand and threw over a bottle of healing medicine.

Leng Bai was startled after receiving the medicinal bottle. The fury on his face gradually lessened. He did not return the medicine. Instead, he

pulled apart his clothes and poured the ice-cold medicinal liquid onto his wound, where fresh blood was dripping. Only then did he slowly sigh in relief. His finger flicked onto the storage ring and a blue glow was shot toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan extended his hand and grabbed the blue glow. He took a look only to find that it was a pale-blue-colored Fire Crystal Card. The number on the Fire Crystal Card had actually reached eighty-six. Among all the Fire Crystal Cards Xiao Yan had seen during this period of time, this was the highest number he had seen.

Xiao Yan held the Fire Crystal Card and did not act like a saint and return it. This was their group's spoils of victory and was not his own. Therefore, he merely cupped his hands toward Leng Bai to thank him.

"That companion of yours is nothing much. Tell him that I will return that lance attack I received today." Leng Bai lifted his head to lean against the tree trunk as he spoke faintly.

"I'm sorry." Xiao Yan sighed. Bai Shan indeed went a little overboard with regards to this matter. If he had beat up Leng Bai until this manner in combat, no one would say anything. However, he had given such a heavy blow after the opponent had admitted defeat and lowered his defenses. This did not really follow the rules.

"Although you have borrowed the strength of the new students to defeat our three groups, it will not be possible for you to take the reward and return to the Inner Academy." Leng Bai's gaze paused in the battleground between Wu Hao and Xiu Yan. At that place, Xiu Yan had already shown signs of weakness in a hard head on collision between the two of them.

"I know. There are still the two groups called 'Black White Evil Stopper.'" Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders and replied.

"Looks like you know quite a lot." Leng Bai raised his eyebrows when he heard Xiao Yan's words. He felt a little astonished.

"What I have said earlier are not some boastful words. This so-called 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' is purposefully set up by the Inner Academy. This is because many new students are very haughty when they

arrive at the Inner Academy. Therefore, the Inner Academy has designed this Hunting Competition. Its purpose is to allow the older students to oppress the vigor of the new students in the forest. Hence, it is easier said than done if you want to forcefully charge out of this forest.”

“I just don’t want us to be robbed until we have nothing left before we enter the Inner Academy. Moreover, I must say that the so-called methods that you older students used to rub off the vigor of the new students is really repulsive. Perhaps it is because they had once received such treatment in the past that they want to return it to the new students. However, this common practice of one batch passing on to the next really won’t do. Even if we did not retaliate this time around, it is likely that there would be new students who would lead groups to resist.” Xiao Yan spoke slowly. His gaze eyed Wu Hao, who had finally shook Xiu Yan with one palm until the latter took over ten steps back. In his heart, he knew that the victory in the battle there was already determined.

Leng Bai was silent. He also clearly understood that the old students participated in this ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ not only to snatch the ‘Fire Energy.’ There were some who basically participated because they wanted to smooth the shadows in their hearts.

“Alright, the battle can be considered to have ended here.” Xiao Yan exhaled a breath of air. He turned his gaze toward the somewhat chaotic battleground. That place had Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Bai Shan participating, the few older students from the Inner Academy who endured bitterly finally could no longer maintain the stalemate. After relying on a fierce aura to injure a couple of new students, they were completely suppressed.

“Ah, what severe losses... these older students are indeed very strong. The Inner Academy is indeed a good place to hone people.” Xiao Yan’s gaze swept over the open ground and shook his head helplessly. There were less than fifteen of the originally forty or so new students who could still stand after defeating the twelve older students who had cooperated well with one another. Most of the remaining students had temporarily lost their combat strength, and lay panting on the ground due to their injuries.

At the moment the final older student fell on the ground, a rejoiceful cry that contained some pain immediately sounded on the open ground. The ten plus new students, who could still move, could not resist the agitation in their hearts as they emitted joyful laughter. In an instant, a layer of joyful atmosphere spread over the original suffocating atmosphere the ground had previously held.

“Haha, everyone, take a look at your companions first. Rub these healing medicine on them. The remaining people should collect the Fire Crystal Cards from the older students’ hands. Since we have obtained victory, it is only natural that we should begin distributing our spoils.” Xiao Yan lifted his head to eye the excitement-filled faces of the new students and smiled. He slowly took a step forward and took out a large amount of healing medicine from within the storage ring. He placed it on a rock and smiled as he spoke to everyone.

“Yes!” At this moment, everyone basically obeyed Xiao Yan’s orders after this great comeback of theirs. Hence, everyone shouted in unison when they heard his words and immediately did as he ordered. In an instant, the empty ground appeared a little busy once again.

“Are you alright?” Xiao Yan smiled and asked as he saw Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao who were walking over toward him.

The three of them nodded. Xun Er and Hu Jia still appeared alright but Wu Hao was panting a little. Clearly, the hard head on fight he had with Xiu Yan earlier had greatly exhausted his Dou Qi and physical strength.

Xiao Yan tapped his hand on his storage ring and a small jade bottle appeared. He tilted it slightly and poured out three ‘Energy Recovery Pills,’ which he handed to the three of them. “These can allow you to quickly recover your Dou Qi. Eat it.”

Xun Er smiled and received the medicinal pill. She did not hesitate even a little as she threw it directly into her mouth.

On the other hand, Hu Jia and Wu Hao hesitated a little before taking one and thanking Xiao Yan softly.

Xiao Yan carelessly smiled, raised his head and could not help but heave

a long sigh as he watched the busy clearing. They had finally managed to completely finish off the three groups. Next, as long as they were given a day to rest, they would be able to charge against the so-called 'Black White Evil Stopper.'

"Tsk tsk, they really do have some ability. They actually managed to swallow those three older student groups." Two old men on the top of a tree within the vast sea of trees slowly opened their eyes. They exchanged glances and shook their heads while they spoke with smiles and some amazement.

"The strength of that little fellow called Xiao Yan seems to be quite great. He was actually able to defeat Su Xiao so swiftly. Although he used the special effect of the Sonic Dou Technique, his clear-cut attack and his sharp eyes are something that even some of the older students in the Inner Academy do not possess." One of the old man praised.

"Ke ke, that's right. Perhaps after this Hunting Competition is over, we should let that old fellow Hu Gan send us some information regarding this little fellow. I think that with his potential, he might be able to squeeze into the top ten of the 'Strong Ranking' after undergoing the Inner Academy's training." The other old man nodded his head slightly and spoke with a smile.

"Yes." The old man who had spoken earlier nodded slightly. He stretched his lazy waist and said, "However, the good luck of these new students is about to end soon. The 'Black White Evil Stopper' this year are some sturdy fellows who frequently earn 'Fire Energy' within the Fighting Arena. What?"

Before all the words sounded, the old man's expression changed slightly. A shocked voice was emitted from his mouth. He tilted his head and exchanged glances with the other old man before saying in a shocked voice, "Those five Qis...? Good fellows. It is really unexpected that there is a fisherman who has come to get a bargain while the sandpiper and the mussels fought. They are indeed worthy of being people who muddled among within the Sports Arena. What a cunning tactic."

Xiao Yan smiled as he eyed the fifteen pale-blue Fire Energy Cards in his hands while standing in the open forested area. His heart let out a long sigh. This was a big acquisition.

Xiao Yan lifted his gaze and swept across the new students whose eyes were fiery hot. He smiled and said, "Next, we can begin to distribute our spoils."

Just as Xiao Yan's voice had sounded, a foreign faint laughter was suddenly emitted from within the dense forest without any warning. Finally, the voice slowly reverberated within the the empty ground, causing everyone's bodies to stiffen.

"Tsk, the new students this year are indeed not ordinary. They were actually able to defeat all the other eight older student groups but this is also quite good. We shall take all of the 'Fire Energy' off your hands."

Xiao Yan's smile-filled face suddenly stiffened. A coldness flashed over his eyes as he slowly lifted his head and threw his gaze toward a spot in the dense forest. The tree leaves suddenly moved at that spot. Immediately, five figures, whose entire bodies were filled with a fierce Qi, flashed and appeared above the tree trunk, like five human-shaped Magic Beasts. They looked down toward the people in the open ground from their high vantage point.

Chapter 448: Unforeseen Turn of Events

Seeing the five human figures that appeared on the tree, the faces of everyone on the empty ground suddenly contorted.

The five people standing on the tree were clad entirely in fancily designed black clothing. If one looked at them from a distance, they appeared to be five ink black shadows. The moment the five of them appeared, a ferocious Qi, that was not the slightest bit hidden, seeped out from their bodies. A force, that caused the expressions of Xiao Yan and the others to appear pressured, covered the entire clearing. It caused them to feel an uncomfortable feeling as though they were being stared at by a wild beast within the forest.

“Sha Tie? You actually followed us here?!” After the five figures appeared, the expression of Leng Bai, who had his back leaning against a tree trunk to catch his breath, morphed. This was especially so after his gaze swept across the man in the middle, whose body was as large as a gorilla’s. He could not help but cry out involuntarily.

“We met a couple of new students on the way and also received the information.” That man among the five, whose figure was tall and large to the point that it caused others to feel pressure, replied indifferently. Immediately, his eyes glanced at the injured Su Xiao and the two others before he smiled and said, “Tsk tsk. It’s very unexpected that even the three of you were defeated by these new students. I really don’t know how you trained within the Inner Academy.”

These words, from the man addressed as Sha Tie by Leng Bai, caused the faces of Leng Bai and the two others to become tinged with red. A moment later, he snorted and said, “The new students this year cannot be compared to the past. What is so strange about being defeated?”

“Forget it. I shall not waste my breath with you. I will settle the rest of the matter next. However, you can forget about me returning the ‘Fire Energy’ to you after this whole fiasco is over. This is due to all of you not having the ability to protect your own belongings, so you can’t blame

others.” Sha Tie waved his hand as he turned his gaze. It finally landed on Xiao Yan, who was holding his heavy ruler. Surprise flashed across his eyes as he asked, “You’re Xiao Yan? Being able to defeat Su Xiao and the others at such an age. No wonder you were able to gather all the new students together.”

Sha Tie’s voice was filled with strength. As he spoke, it directly shook some of the new students until they covered their ears.

“You should be the Black Demon of the so-called ‘Black White Evil Stopper’?” Xiao Yan exchanged gazes with Sha Tie as he replied in a deep voice. When he spoke, his gaze slowly swept across the five black shadows. His heart gradually sunk. He realized that each of them basically had strengths similar to Leng Bai’s. The man called Tie Sha was even more frightening. If Xiao Yan had probed correctly, that fellow was likely to be a strong person at the peak of the Da Dou Shi class!

“You can call us the ‘Black Demon’ Group. I am the group leader, Tie Sha.” Tie Sha parted his mouth and smiled. His white teeth emitted the dense coldness of a wild beast baring its fangs. He looked directly at Xiao Yan and said, “Let me tell you all some good news. The matter of new students robbing the older students of their ‘Fire Energy’ these few days has already been transmitted to the Inner Academy. Currently, you, Xiao Yan, already have quite the reputation within the Inner Academy before you have even entered it. There are already an unknown number of Inner Academy students who ran over here, waiting for you all to leave. If you all really walk out of the forest while carrying so much ‘Fire Energy,’ you and this batch of new students, would really become infamous within the Inner Academy.”

Xiao Yan remained silent and did not respond to Tie Sha’s words.

“Of course, as one of the last two groups in this year’s ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition,’ our duty is to strike down all the thorn-like new students who appear. Hence, if you want to smoothly walk out, it is still possible. Hand over your Fire Crystal Cards and I assure you that I will not be forceful. What do you say?” Tie Sha smiled as he spoke to Xiao Yan.

“There are no other choices?” Xiao Yan slowly sighed as he asked indifferently.

“Yes, this is the only one.” Sha Tie shook his head with a smile. His gaze swept one round over the new students below and said, “If you are still able to gather forty new students with their full combat strength, just our Black Demon Group alone would really have difficulty swallowing all of you. Unfortunately, however, after the exhaustion from combating Su Xiao and the rest earlier, it is basically a given that this new student group of yours doesn’t pose any threat to us. As long as I defeat the few of you, a full period can be placed on this year’s ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition.’”

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes. The hand, which he used to hold the Heavy Xuan Ruler, slowly tightened. By his side, Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao took a step forward. Following closely behind Xiao Yan, those ten plus scattered new students whose breathing was a little weak, clenched their teeth and swarmed toward Xiao Yan after a brief moment of hesitation. This moment did not allow them to withdraw. After all, they would not think that this Sha Tie, whose appearance was not that of the kind type, would let them off with the ‘Fire Energy’ in their hands if Xiao Yan and the others were defeated.

Since they could not avoid the hassle, then they might as well go all out!

“Why? Do you want to fight to your deaths just to retaliate?” Tie Sha lifted his eyebrows upon seeing their actions. A dense cold smile surfaced on his rough face, “Looks like you are all still holding some hope in your strength. Hee hee, just as well. We have not attacked anyone for nearly three days within this damn forest. Our bones have started to become itchy.”

“Wait!”

Just as Sha Tie was twisting his fist, a cry suddenly sounded. The former’s eyebrows knit slightly together as his gaze followed the voice and looked over, only to find a handsome young man wearing white clothes. His gaze swept over the face of the young man and felt that it was a little

familiar.

“Big Brother Sha Tie. Do you still remember me? We met last time when you came out on leave with my older cousin Bai Feng.” Bai Shan held the long lance in his hand as he cupped his hands toward Tie Shan and spoke with a smile.

“Bai Feng? You... are Bai Shan?” Sha Tie was startled when he heard Bai Feng’s name. Fear flashed across his eyes. Immediately, his gaze paused on Bai Shan’s face as he finally remembered before speaking in the manner of someone just having come to realize something.

“Haha, that’s right.” Bai Shan smiled as he replied. He finally sighed in relief when he heard Sha Tie speak his name.

“You are also part of this batch of new students?” Sha Tie glanced at Bai Shan’s position. He appeared to have understood something as he spoke with deeper meaning.

“Yes.” Bai Shan smiled awkwardly and nodded. He rotated his eyeballs and said, “Big Brother Tie Shan, I wonder if on the account of my elder cousin brother you can...”

“On account of Bai Feng’s face, I can naturally let you leave. I do have some relations with him. Naturally, I will not attack you.” Sha Tie waved his hand and smiled as he replied before Bai Shan finished his sentence.

“Uh...” Bai Shan was somewhat dull when he was interrupted by Tie Sha. He could not help but feel a little hesitant after hearing the words that the latter spoke. The corner of his gaze drifted over to Xiao Yan and the rest. He was just thinking of saying something when he coincidentally saw a little coldness in Sha Tie’s brows. His heart immediately became afraid.

“Bai Shan, you just need to take care of yourself no matter what happens. Although I am the group leader of the Black Demon Group, I must also be responsible for my companions. I have already given Bai Feng enough face by letting you go. You must also take a step back.” Sha Tie slowly said. The warning tone in his voice was extremely obvious.

Bai Shan’s expression changed slightly when he heard this. He

immediately recovered swiftly and nodded.

“Alright, you should quickly leave this place. You need not bother about any other matters.” Tie Sha waved his hands toward Bai Shan and commanded.

Bai Shan hesitated a little when he heard this.

“Bai Shan, you want to be a deserter and flee?” Hu Jia, who had been watching coldly on the sidelines, immediately frowned deeply as she coldly shouted when she saw Bai Shan’s hesitation.

“I am considered a deserter just because I do not fight the enemy with all of you? Do you really think that we are a group? Between us was just a mutual interaction where we would receive what we needed. Moreover, the greatest victor of this transaction is still Xiao Yan. The few of us fought to the death and became so exhausted, but he has taken all the good things.” Bai Shan immediately became furious when he heard Hu Jia cold cry. He could no longer resist the jealousy and unwillingness within his heart.

“You...” Hu Jia also became furious at Bai Shan’s retort. “Without Xiao Yan’s leadership, could you have reached this point? With just you alone, you would be defeated by any older student group that you met. Would you have been able to stand where you are now with nearly a hundred ‘Fire Energy’ without his leadership?”

“There is no need to say any more. Since he wants to go, just let him go. From the start, this group of ours was temporarily formed. There is no binding strength. Everyone is free to leave. We may not lose even without him.” Xiao Yan, who was beside Hu Jia, pulled her back and spoke faintly. He had already known that Bai Shan was extremely dissatisfied with him. He would sooner or later be a scourge if he was forced to stay in the group. Now that he wanted to leave by himself, it would eliminate the trouble for Xiao Yan to be on guard against him.

“Hmph.” Hu Jia snorted. She coldly eyed Bai Shan and could not help but feel some disgust in her heart. Why did she not see that this fellow as such a person in the past? The type of people she despised the most were the

kind of people who would flee at the last moment and abandon their companions due to fear whenever a strong enemy approached. Compared to Bai Shan, Hu Jia suddenly felt that Xiao Yan was a lot more pleasing to the eye. At the very least, the latter would not abandon his companions in a crisis.

Wu Hao raised his head slightly. There was some disdain contained within those eyes that he used to look at Bai Shan.

“Alright, you can all follow him. This young master shall not accompany you.” The eyes of those new students similarly shot out a look of disdain. It caused Bai Shan’s face to twitch slightly. He stared ruthlessly at Xiao Yan before waving his hand. His body leaped and flashed onto a tree branch before finally entering the forest and disappearing.

Xiao Yan indifferently raised his head as he eyed the forest where Bai Shan had disappeared into. His gaze looked directly at Tie Sha. Although Bai Shan leaving did cause their fighting strength to be severely impacted, it was still impossible for him to simply hand over the ‘Fire Energy.’

“I have already said earlier that that companion of yours cannot make it.” Bai Leng’s voice which contained some disdain slowly sounded from the side.

Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders but did not express any opinions.

“Just admit defeat. Tie Shan’s group is not something that we can compare with. Moreover, your companion has already left. The originally low chances of victory suffered a huge loss.” Leng Bai sighed.

Although Xiao Yan knew that Leng Bai’s words were the true, he did not ease up even a little. He smiled as his gaze looked directly at Tie Shan. A long while later, a calm voice caused the somewhat cold hearts of the new students present, from the result of a strong enemy appearing, to once again become filled with a fire and fighting intent.

“Since I have already gathered everyone together, we should naturally bring them to successfully charge out. No matter how strong the opponent is, I, Xiao Yan, will not take a step back. Therefore...”

“Let’s Fight!”

Chapter 449: Fighting with the Black Demon Group

Xiao Yan's calm voice reverberated slightly within the forest clearing but it managed to cause the heated blood of the new students standing behind him to boil. Their fighting intent surged out into their chests. Regardless of whether they succeeded or failed, as long as they went all out and tried, they would at least have a clear conscience. They did not have much 'Fire Energy' in their hands and it was nothing even if it was snatched away. Moreover, one could not kill in this Hunting Competition. At the very worst, they would be thrashed into the ground, meaning they would not suffer much.

As they thought in this manner within their hearts, the fifteen new students, whose breaths were heavy also raised their heads. They fiercely stared at Sha Tie and the other four people on top of the trees, no longer having even the slightest hints of fear in their hearts.

"Hee hee, you've got backbone. Since this is the case, let my Black Demon Group try and see just which part of this new student group of yours, which has shaken the entire Inner Academy, is extraordinary!" Surprise flashed across Sha Tie's eyes as he eyed Xiao Yan, who actually did not have the slightest bit of fear when facing a strong group and even managed to muster up the courage in other people's heart. He nodded slightly. Although Xiao Yan's resistance would bring some him trouble, he, who had muddled in the Inner Academy Fighting Arena all year long, felt admiration for these kinds of headstrong people deep in his heart. At the very least, the act of Bai Shan abandoning his companion and leaving earlier disgusted him. Of course, he would only store these words within his heart and would not speak them aloud.

As Sha Tie's words sounded. Five powerful forces erupted out of the bodies of the five people and shrouded the area. The intense pressure caused the hearts of the new students, which was just filled with fighting intent, to sink slightly.

Xiao Yan exhaled a deep breath of air as he sensed the force that had crashed down. He turned his head and said in a deep voice to everyone, "All of you be careful. I will handle Sha Tie."

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, I'm afraid that that Tie Sha already has one foot in the Dou Ling class. The chances of victory in a normal fight are not very great. However, if you want to raise your strength forcefully just like you did in the Qualifying Competition, the damage to your body would really be a little too great." Xun Er's eyebrows were nearly vertical as she spoke in a worried manner. She clearly understood just how serious the injury that Xiao Yan received to his body after he had raised his strength to the point where he could contend with a strong Dou Ling. If he had not luckily and coincidentally raised his strength that day, it was likely that he would need around half a month's time to return to peak condition.

"Ke ke, no problem. I will try my best not to forcefully raise my strength. I am still able to fight him by relying on other things." Xiao Yan waved his hand. He also clearly understood that while the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' may be able to let him raise his strength to the point where he could contend with a strong Dou Ling for a short period of time, the instantaneous wild energy that erupted from the 'Heavenly Flame' did indeed cause quite a great amount of damage to the interior of his body. Therefore, he would naturally not touch it if he didn't need to use it. Moreover, even if he did not use the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change,' he believed that he would not be defeated by Sha Tie hands within a few exchanges.

"In any case, you should still be a little more careful." Xun Er could only nod her head when she saw Xiao Yan's insistence. Her gaze turned toward the five people on the tree and said softly, "Hu Jia and Wu Hao are already weakened from the previous fight. I'm afraid that they can only merely handle one person each. Moreover, it is difficult to say just who will win. I am also able to block one person. However, the other party still has one person."

Hu Jia and Wu Hao could only helplessly nod their heads when they heard Xun Er's words. After all, what she said was the truth.

"I'm a little better, but it is likely that Wu Hao does not have much Dou Qi left after undergoing the head on fight with Xiu Yan earlier. Although Xiao Yan's medicinal pill did provide some assistance, it is definitely impossible to completely recover within this short amount of time. Moreover, our few opponents this time around are not weaker than Xiu Yan." Hu Jia sighed.

"You should not be too worried. He will not be able to defeat me for at least ten minutes." Wu Hao said in a low voice "Instead, it looks like we can only first let the new students block the last person of the other group."

"You can be rest assured. Although there isn't much Dou Qi left within us, we do have quite a number of people. That fellow won't be able to finish us off within a short period of time. As long as Senior Xiao Yan or any of you finish off your opponent, we would be able to gain the advantage in this battle," One of the new students laughed and took the lead to open his mouth to speak when he heard the conversation of Xun Er's group.

"That's right. We can temporarily block him. However, the decisive factor of the final victory of the fight lies in Senior Xiao Yan's and your hands. With our current conditions, I'm afraid that we will really have difficulty beating a five or six star Da Dou Shi. After all, our strengths are merely around eight or nine star Dou Shis." Some of the new students also laughed and went along with what was being said.

"Yes." Xiao Yan nodded slight. He continued with a smile, "Since that is the case, I will have to ask you all. As long as you can block the extra person of the other party, we will do our best to defeat our opponent and extend our hand to help you out."

"Yes!" The fifteen new students on the empty ground cried out in unison. Fifteen forces belonging to eight or nine star Dou Shis spread out from within their bodies and created a considerable force.

"Do your best! Senior Xiao Yan, defeat them!" Quite a number of new students on both sides, who had lost the fighting strength, also supported

their bodies with great difficulty as they got up and cried out loud, cheering on Xiao Yan's group.

A smile was lifted on Xiao Yan face when he saw that their morale was high. He held the Heavy Xuan Ruler with his hand and exchanged glances with Xun Er and the other two. Immediately, four human figures abruptly shot out in four different directions.

"I will handle Xiao Yan. Each of you will face one of the remaining three. The extra one will finish off those new students. After that swiftly change targets to assist the others." Sha Tie waved his hand and shouted in a low voice as the four people spread out and pulled back.

"Yes!" Four low and deep voices sounded out in an orderly manner. As the voices sounded, five human figures pressed gently off of the tree branches and immediately turned into black shadows. They descended like bats who were hunting for their prey in the dark night and within two breaths, appeared in front of Xiao Yan and the three others who had spread out and pulled back. The additional person was like a meteorite as he directly charged toward the fifteen man new student group. Powerful Dou Qi immediately exploded out in all directions.

Xiao Yan's feet stomped heavily against the ground. His body, which was charging forward suddenly halted. His gaze narrowed as he eyed Sha Tie, who had appeared in front of him. The faint domineering aura that was emitted from the other party's tall, strong and somewhat different body stature caused Xiao Yan's brows to frown tightly. This fellow was indeed a strong opponent.

"The fight is about to begin. I will not look down on you regardless of any reasons. This is because once one possesses this kind of mentality, one would usually be unable to earn any 'Fire Energy' within the Inner Academy Fighting Arena." Sha Tie twisted his neck slightly. A somewhat dark-golden-colored Dou Qi slowly seeped out from within his body. Finally, it surrounded him until he appeared like he was sculpted from metal, causing his appearance to appear extremely domineering.

"Gold Dou Qi? This fellow actually practices a Dou Qi of this affinity?"

Xiao Yan's eyebrows twitched when he saw the dark-golden Dou Qi on the surface of Sha Tie's body. This kind of Dou Qi was extremely rare. However, its attacking and defensive strength was extremely strong. If it were not for people who practiced this Dou Qi to have such slow reaction times, it was likely that he would really be an opponent that would cause people an extremely great headache.

Sha Tie's hand did not hold any weapons. Clearly, he was a strong person who belonged to the kind that used close ranged combat.

Xiao Yan's expression became slightly more relaxed after identifying his opponent's attacking method. Coincidentally, he also belonged to this style. If they were to fight in this manner, it would allow all him to unleash the fighting techniques that he specialized in to their maximum potentials.

Xiao Yan inserted the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand into the ground and sensed that after the heavy ruler had left his hand, powerful Dou Qi surged and flowed turbulently in his body. He slowly let out a long breath as green-colored Dou Qi rose from within his body. When the Dou Qi occasionally writhed, a faint fire seeding would flash and appear. However, after the fire seedling appeared, it disappeared with a flash. Therefore, it was extremely difficult to discover it under the cover of the green-colored Dou Qi.

"Six star Da Dou Shi? No wonder you could best Su Xiao. With this kind of strength, you are comparable to the older students who have been in the Inner Academy for a year." As he felt the force emitted from within Xiao Yan's body, Sha Tie suddenly came to a realization and immediately spoke.

"However, with just this level, there would still be quite some difficulty if you wanted to defeat me." Sha Tie parted his mouth and smiled toward Xiao Yan. His hands gently collided together and actually emitted the clear sound of metal striking metal.

"We won't know until we try, will we?" Xiao Yan smiled indifferently. His feet slowly rubbed against the ground while his body was slightly quiet.

Immediately, he became like a taut bow as his body suddenly tensed up. Following this movement, his feet slammed against the ground and a green-colored Dou Qi surged out from his feet. As a clear energy explosion sounded, Xiao Yan's body turned into a blurry black shadow. In an instant, he closed in on Sha Tie.

Seeing that Xiao Yan actually adopted a close range hand to hand combat, a cold smile was lifted onto Sha Tie's face. His large fist tightened as he drew his hand back and threw his elbow out. Dark-golden-colored Dou Qi swiftly agglomerated. Finally, it violently smashed down against the black shadow, which had already appeared beside him in a lightning-like manner. The wind that his elbow carried directly cut through the air. A shapeless force shook and caused two deep scars that were two inches deep on a ground a couple of feet away.

Xiao Yan's face did not change as he sensed the sharp rushing wind sound transmitted from above his head. His hand suddenly rose and a green-colored energy layer was swiftly converged to cover his fist. Finally, he collided head on with Sha Tie's elbow.

“Bang!”

A low and deep muffled sound rang out from the epicenter of the contact. The powerful force that swarmed down from his fist pressed Xiao Yan down a little. However, his expression still remained indifferent. His left hand was extended out in a lightning-like manner and suddenly stopped when it was about a foot from Sha Tie's chest. Immediately, a shapeless force gushed out in all directions.

Fire Palm!

This was a Dou Technique which Xiao Yan had learned a couple of years ago. With his current strength, the force that gushed out when he used this 'Fire Palm' was already sufficient to jolt a Da Dou Shi until the latter was injured. It was unlike the past where he could only blow a person until they staggered.

The shapeless force exploded into Sha Tie's chest. Immediately, the latter swayed his body a little, and he actually took two steps back from

the force of the explosion.

“All sorts of bizarre Dou Techniques emerging endlessly. Xiao Yan, you really cause me to feel greater anticipation. However, all of these unorthodox attacks do not have much actual use against me. Hence, you should reveal your true ability.” Sha Tie patted his chest and a clanging sound was emitted while he laughed coldly.

Xiao Yan slowly sighed as he eyed Sha Tie, who appeared as though nothing had happened. His expression gradually became serious as his hands rotated slightly. A moment later, a noble green-colored flame soared...

The moment the green-colored flames rose from Xiao Yan's palm, the eyes of the two old men in the vast sea of trees, who appeared to be watching a show, were opened. In their shock, they cried out involuntarily, “Heavenly Flame?”

Chapter 450: Race Against Time

Sha Tie's eyes stared intently at the green-colored flame that rose from Xiao Yan's palm. The instant that the flame had materialized, he clearly sensed that the temperature between the trees rose by a lot. His expression immediately became more serious as he looked at Xiao Yan with some astonishment and asked, "You are an alchemist?"

In the Dou Qi continent, there were only two possibilities for one to be able to summon out an Essence Flame. One was the Fire Seed that an alchemist had obtained from the various different kinds of fire affinity Magical Beasts, which he would then refine for his own use.

The other possibility was that a he was a strong person who practiced a fire affinity Dou Qi. However, if one wanted to rely just on Dou Qi to agglomerate an Essence Flame, one must at least be at the Dou Wang class before they could begin to think about succeeding. Of course, nothing was absolute. There were also some people who practiced Dou Qi of the fire affinity and were not alchemists but were able to obtain some strange flames for their own use. Similarly, however, the requirement placed on the level of one's strength was extremely harsh. Seeing the current Xiao Yan, it was clear that he had not met the requirements of the latter possibilities. Hence, Sha Tie had immediately chose to voice the first possibility.

Xiao Yan did not reply Sha Tie's astonished words. The green-colored flame spread out from his hand, and swiftly wrapped both his hands within it. He lifted his head slightly and a green-colored light occasionally flared in his dark black pupils.

"Bang!"

Xiao Yan's feet once again stomped against the ground. He could hear a clear muffled sound as his body turned into a pale-green-colored blur which carried an extremely high temperature, and shot explosively toward Sha Tie.

The blazing air that pounced toward his face caused Tie Sha's brows to

furrow slightly. Although he could not determine what type of flame Xiao Yan had summoned, he could vaguely guess that the strength of this flame was definitely not weak from the sharp rise in the temperature of his surroundings.

Sha Tie's iron pagoda like body stood in the same spot. He did not choose to dodge. The golden Dou Qi bestowed upon him gave him a great attacking and defensive strength but it deprived him of agility. He knew that even if he wanted to dodge, he would definitely be unable to escape Xiao Yan's attack. Since this was the case, why should he bother doing something so futile and instead risk exposing a weakness in the process?

The hot air became increasingly closer. Sha Tie emitted a stern cry from his mouth and dark-golden-colored Dou Qi abruptly surged out from within his body. The golden light shot out and finally absorbed Xiao Yan into it. At a glance, it appeared as though he was a person molded entirely from gold.

The heated atmosphere was only reduced a little after the Dou Qi Armor appeared. Sha Tie's enormous gold-like fist was slowly tightened. Finally, it was thrown out without any fancy moves or skill.

Although Sha Tie's fist did not have any variety in his move, the terrifying strength contained in it directly caused the air around Xiao Yan to be saturated with it. At this moment, absolute strength embraced everything.

Xiao Yan's face tensed. The Dou Crystal within the vortex of his body repeatedly trembled. Wave after wave of powerful Dou Qi was spat out. Finally, it swiftly circulated within his Qi Paths, allowing Xiao Yan to be filled with fighting strength.

Green-colored flames swiftly enshrouded his fist before it suddenly struck out. It heavily collided with Sha Tie's fist in an impartial manner. In an instant, a powerful ripple spread out from the middle of the two of them, shaking and splitting the few large trees near the two of them, forming a couple of crack lines. The trees became shaky and unstable.

The ferocious force being transmitted from their fists caused Xiao Yan to

swiftly take two steps back. On the other hand, Sha Tie's body merely trembled a couple of times. It appeared that in terms of a competition of pure strength, Xiao Yan was still a little weaker than Sha Tie.

Of course, Xiao Yan may have been shaken until he took two steps back but Sha Tie also felt a little uncomfortable. The green-colored flame on Xiao Yan's fist caused him to suffer greatly. In the collision earlier, his fist would have likely been roasted until it swelled up by a couple of layers had it not been for his Dou Qi Armor isolating it. Even though this was the case, Sha Tie's fist still had a faint searing pain.

Sha Tie's gaze obscurely swept over the green-colored flame in Xiao Yan's hand. Shock flashed through his heart. It was not that he had never seen the flame of an alchemist. He had even fought with some of the students from the Alchemist Department in the Fighting Arena but the flames that those students summoned could not breach his Dou Qi Armor and cause him to even feel a little injured. However, that strange green-colored flame on Xiao Yan's hand today had this kind of frightening unique ability. This caused Sha Tie to involuntarily feel a solemn feeling within his heart.

The moment the thought in Sha Tie's heart was swiftly spinning, Xiao Yan had once again pounced toward him. This time, however, he gave up on having head on collisions. Instead, he began to use the advantage of his agility and repeatedly flashed around Sha Tie's body like a ghost. His fists frequently carried a green-colored flame as they were thrown out, carrying a 'Qiang Qiang' sound of metal clashing within the empty forest.

Sha Tie did not have too great of a response toward Xiao Yan's nearly continuous attacks. He dodged those that he could, and forcefully resisted those that he could not. Occasionally, he would wave his heavy fist and the feeling of an increasingly heavy force on it caused Xiao Yan to have no choice but to pull back to dodge it.

The moment Xiao Yan and Tie Sha's fight was becoming increasingly fierce, the other few battlegrounds had also slowly entered into a white-hot phase.

Perhaps it was because they had already fought once earlier but the Dou Qi which was spread over the surface of Hu Jia's and Wu Hao's body started to become a little dim after nearly six to seven minutes of battle. Hu Jia was a little better but Wu Hao's strength, speed, dodging ability, etc. had already greatly declined because of his weakening Dou Qi which resulted in him beginning to be suppressed into a disadvantageous position by his opponent from the 'Black Demon Group.'

If it was not because of the killing aura within Wu Hao's attacks being too strong and that the member of the 'Black Demon Group' was a little afraid of being seriously injured, it was likely that Wu Hao's fight would have been even more difficult.

Compared with these two people who were each in a somewhat disadvantaged situation, Xun Er was the complete opposite. Golden light shot out explosively from her palms. Her body was as elegant as a wisp of light smoke while her attacking speed was so fast that it brought about numerous afterimages. Perhaps it was because she clearly understood that Wu Hao and Hu Jia could not last long. Therefore, she did not have any thoughts of preserving her strength. Occasionally, she would display powerful Dou Techniques, forcing her opponent back until the latter was in tough spots. If it were not because of his rich combat experience, it was likely that this unlucky member of the 'Black Demon Group' would be the first to be defeated.

Outside of these three battlegrounds, there was the most chaotic battleground. That was the one where fifteen new students were fighting with the final 'Black Demon Group' member. Although there were a great number of new students, the fifteen of them all had a varying amount of injuries due to their fight with the three groups lead by Su Xiao earlier. It was naturally impossible for them to obtain victory now that they met a strong person whose strength was around the five star Da Dou Shi level.

Hence, in merely less than ten minutes, five of the fifteen new students were already injured by that 'Black Demon Group' member and had withdrawn. The remaining ten could only rely on their cooperation with one another to barely hang on. However, it was clear that the cooperation

between them was not very good. Hence, every two to three minutes, their opponent would find an opening and injure one of them until they temporarily lost the ability to continue fighting.

In five battlegrounds on this empty land, Hu Jia's, Wu Hao's, and the new students' ones were all in an unfavorable situation. By relying on his 'Heavenly Flame,' Xiao Yan was able to contend with Sha Tie for a while. However, if he did not use a decisive attack, it was clearly impossible for him to obtain victory. Hence, among the five battlegrounds, only Xun Er was in a complete advantage.

In the current battlefield, whichever side could first free up an extra pair of hands was crucial. As long as there was someone who could defeat their opponent half a minute earlier than the others, this battle would perhaps swiftly point the victory indicator to that side!

Everyone present in the battlefield, including all those new students who were not participating, understood this point. Hence, their gazes were all firmly staring at the battleground of Wu Hao and Xun Er. This was because these two places would be the two battlegrounds where they would be the first to obtain victory or the first to lose.

The blood-colored Dou Qi spreading all over Wu Hao's body was growing increasingly dim. Clearly, Wu Hao's Dou Qi had already begun to enter into the stage where it was about to burn out. When he fought with Xiu Yan earlier, he had exhausted all his strength. Now he needed to undergo this kind of high cost battle. He was about to be unable to hold on even though he had consumed Xiao Yan's 'Energy Recovery Pill' a moment ago.

The blood-colored heavy sword in his hand violently hacked at the opponent. However, his current degree of strength and speed allowed the opponent to easily dodge it. The latter's body flashed and appeared on Wu Hao's left side. The knife in his hand carried a sharp force as it hacked at Wu Hao's wrist. Immediately, Wu Hao's blood-colored sword left his hand. The 'Black Demon Group' member let out a pleased cold laughter. Dou Qi shrouded his hands and he immediately struck heavily at Wu Hao's chest. Seeing this momentum, it was likely that Wu Hao would be the first to be

defeated if he were to be struck.

Under the focus of everyone, his fist became increasingly close to Wu Hao. However, just as his fist was about to land on Wu Hao's body, the somewhat grayish-dark-faced Wu Hao suddenly widened his eyes. Two blood lines flowed out of his nose. A rich killing aura surged out of his body as though he had suddenly got his second wind just before falling. A low and deep roar sounded from his throat. The originally dark and pale-blood-colored Dou Qi once again became bright red. He tightened his fist and suddenly threw it out fiercely.

“Bang!”

As both fists made contact, a muffled sound reverberated unceasingly on the open ground. Wu Hao's shoulders trembled intensely while that member of the 'Black Demon Group' let out a muffled groan. A thread of blood flowed down from the corner of the latter's mouth. He took a couple of continuous step back while sliding against the ground before he managed to stabilize his body. Lifting his head, he looked at Wu Hao's much paler face with a mixture of shock and fury. Clearly, Wu Hao had displayed a certain Secret Technique that would overdraw his strength in order for such a strength to erupt instantaneously earlier.

However, seeing the color on Wu Hao's face, it appeared that the current him could no longer use this kind of Secret Technique to overdraw his strength for a second time.

“Hmph!” That member of the 'Black Demon Group' saw that Wu Hao had already run out of steam and immediately let out a snort. He forcefully suppressed the injuries within his body as his body turned into a black shadow which once again shot toward Wu Hao.

“Bang!”

Just as he was merely around five meters from Wu Hao, a black shadow suddenly shot over. That member of the 'Black Demon Group' was alarmed. His forward charging body paused and immediately began to hurriedly take two step back.

As he was pulling back, the black shadow heavily landed on the ground.

The expression of that member of the 'Black Demon Group' changed. This black shadow was actually the person who had been fighting against Xun Er moments earlier.

An aghast expression flashed across his heart. He hurriedly turned his head to take a look, only to see a green-clothed young lady standing indifferently beside Wu Hao. Golden light shrouded her palm, piercing his eyes until they were a little strained.

“Crap...”

Chapter 451: Reversing The Situation

“Oh!”

The green-clothed young lady, who had suddenly appeared beside Wu Hao in the battleground immediately caused the expressions of the spectating injured new students to be filled with a wild joy as they cheered out loudly. Xun Er had defeated her opponent at such a crucial moment and extended her hand to assist Wu Hao. This undoubtedly added a heavy weight to Xiao Yan’s group that was sufficient to tip the scales of this battle.

“Are you alright?” Xun Er carelessly asked as her gaze stared intently at the ugly expression of the ‘Black Demon Group’ member.

“I’m still alright.” Wu Hao’s body swayed a little. His expression was pale as he clenched his teeth and said.

“Leave him to me. You should first rest for awhile.” Xun Er was able to see the strain that the current Wu Hao was undergoing. She gently spoke these words as the golden glow in her palms grew increasingly powerful and eye-piercing.

“There’s no need. He was seriously wounded after being struck by my palm earlier. Let’s join hands and use the fastest speed to defeat him. Otherwise, Hu Jia and the other new students won’t be able to hold out for much longer.” Wu Hao inhaled a deep breath of air and a sleek redness surfaced on his pale-white face. His words had just sounded when he maneuvered the little Dou Qi left within him and fiercely charged toward that member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ without allowing Xun Er to speak.

“Hey...” Xun Er hurriedly cried out when she saw that Wu Hao actually still dared to take the lead in attacking. Her body flashed and within a breath’s time, she overtook Wu Hao. Golden light suddenly surged between her palms. Immediately, an extremely long golden-colored whip was swiftly uncoiled. Finally, the whip fully unfurled and the clear sound of a whip snapping surged through the air.

There appeared to be a faint and vaguely visible golden-colored flame surrounding the golden-colored energy whip. When the whip moved, its speed was as fast as lightning. The member of the 'Black Demon Group' could only feel a golden glow flash in front of him as an incinerating breeze came falling toward his head. His expression immediately changed. With a sudden movement, his body rolled backward in a miserable manner.

The golden-colored long whip carried the superheated breeze as it struck the ground not far in front. Immediately, the originally dampened ground swiftly became dry at a rate visible to the naked eye. An instant later, a half meter long scar appeared in the ground after it was grilled by the high temperature until it became as hard as rock.

That member of the 'Black Demon Group' glanced at the surface of the ground which was grilled until it became rock-like. He forcefully swallowed a mouthful of saliva. However, before he even had the time to recover, a blood-colored shadow suddenly flashed from his side. Finally, a leg heavily collided with his chest before he had time to react.

"Argh..." After being kicked, a sleek redness surfaced on the face of this member of the 'Black Demon Group.' He forcefully suppressed the fresh blood that was about to reach his mouth as his throat let out a soft groan. After undergoing repeated blows, some hostility had also flashed in his eyes. He tried his best to raise his strength as his stomach was depressed inward. Immediately, he released his breath forcefully.

As he let out his breath, the Dou Qi, which was agglomerated in his body, abruptly erupted from his chest in energy ripples. Finally, it collided with Wu Hao's leg. The latter, which had originally already run out of steam, spat out a mouthful of fresh blood under this reflected Dou Qi shockwave. His body flew back a couple of meters before he feebly fell onto some withered leaves.

"Bang!"

Before this member of the 'Black Demon Group' could rejoice after wounding Wu Hao, the lithe green-colored figure flashed in front of him

like a ghost. That elegant and exquisite pretty face contained some coldness at this moment. A golden glow shone brightly from her right palm. When she was only half a foot from the former, a golden glowing palm shot out explosively and heavily smashed against his chest.

“Glug!”

The member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ finally could not endure any longer upon receiving a firm and heavy blow from Xun Er. A mouthful of fresh blood was spat out from his mouth while his legs slid against the ground as he continued to slide back after receiving this powerful blow from Xun Er. Finally, his body heavily collided with a thick tree trunk. The force that seeped out from his back actually shook the tree trunk until a few crack lines appeared.

Merely less than one minute had passed in this battleground from the moment Wu Hao launched a sudden attack until the end when the member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ was defeated. Many new students could only see Wu Hao charging in before being forced back by the opponent as well as Xun Er’s exceedingly strong strike.

However, regardless of whether they had clearly seen the course of the fight, the defeat of that member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ was real. Hence, after confirming that the latter could no longer continue to fight, a wild joyous cry once again sounded throughout the clearing. Many new students who did not have the strength to participate in the battle were so excited at this moment that their faces flushed with joy. Following the defeat of these two people, the chance of victory for Xiao Yan’s group was no longer the kind that was so low to the point that it was impossible!

At this moment, two of the five opponents were defeated. On the other hand, only Wu Hao alone in Xiao Yan’s group had lost his fighting strength. From the looks of it, by relying on Xun Er’s outstanding strength, they had already raised their extremely disadvantageous position to a level where they could match the strength of the ‘Black Demon Group’.

This caused the new students to finally see the hope of victory.

Watching from the sidelines under a tree, Su Xiao, Leng Bai, Xiu Yan,

and a group of people leaned against the tree trunk and eyed the unpredictable battle circle. Some of them could not help but have shocked expressions after seeing that Xun Er, by herself, actually managed to defeat two members of the 'Black Demon Group', whose strength were similar to their own. Only until this moment did they throw a solemn gaze toward this young lady who was so pretty that it caused people to have difficulty shifting their gaze away.

"This group of Xiao Yan's is really strong... Earlier, if the girls called Xun Er and Hu Jia chose to surround and attack us, we would have definitely suffered a quicker defeat." Su Xiao laughed bitterly and sighed.

Beside him, Leng Bai and Xiu Yan also laughed bitterly and nodded. These two girls, who appeared to be weak, actually possessed such powerful strength. A group consisting of five people with the strength of a five star Da Dou Shi... as he thought of this, Leng Bai could not resist having the impulse to roll his eyes. This kind of lineup could be considered a middle level group even when ranked among the groups from the Inner Academy.

"If that Bai Shan did not get cold feet and flee, it is difficult to say who would win or lose in their fiery battle with the 'Black Demon Group'..." Xiu Yan tightened his fist and spoke in a deep voice. When he mentioned Bai Shan's name, the disdain on his face was clearly not the least bit hidden. His character was similar to the Dou Qi which he practiced. Both of which belonged to the straightforward type. Hence, he did not hide any of his dislike for Bai Shan.

"The weakness that was created by Bai Shan leaving has already been evened out by that girl called Xun Er. As long as she is able to join hands with the few remaining new students to defeat another member of the 'Black Demon Group,' they would be able to reverse the tide." Su Xiao slowly said. After saying that, he paused for a moment as his gaze swept toward Xiao Yan, who did not show any sign of losing despite matching up against Sha Tie as their fight was in full swing. An amazement flashed across his eyes as he softly said, "Of course, the precondition of this is that Xiao Yan is able to firmly hold Sha Tie off before she defeats the other

members of the 'Black Demon Group'. Otherwise..."

"Yes..."

Leng Bai and Xiu Yan nodded slightly. Although the situation in the battlefield had already begun to lean toward the new students, once there was a problem in the battle Xiao Yan was in, the situation, which they had turned around with great difficulty, would once again be reversed without any doubt.

Although it may appear that Xun Er was currently the most important factor in the battlefield, the reality was that Xiao Yan's battle was the one which the most decisive effect!

If Xiao Yan lost, then the new students would be completely hopeless. However, if Xiao Yan was able to successfully drag it out with Sha Tie until Xun Er defeated the other members of the 'Black Demon Group' that were fighting the other new students, it was likely that Xiao Yan's group would create the first miracle in the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' since its inception so many years ago!

There had never been a batch of incoming students who were able to defeat either of the two groups which acted as the 'Black White Evil Stopper.' At this moment, however, Xiao Yan's group was slowly stepping toward this miracle that had never been seen before!

Sha Tie had clearly sensed that two members of his own group were already defeated. Immediately, his expression became a little ugly. When he struck out, his attacks were becoming increasingly sharp. The wind from his palm cut through the air and emitted a 'hu hu' sound, causing the air to emit a low and deep explosion sound.

Although Sha Tie's attacks had become increasingly stronger, Xiao Yan had his lips tightly pursed together. His body was like a small boat in a precarious storm under the shadow of those heavy blows. No matter how tyrannical the waves were, he was always able to maintain the boat such that it would not end up capsizing regardless of how dangerous the situation became.

At this moment, Xiao Yan had undoubtedly unleashed his own strength

to its peak. Moreover, he was also clear that his current task was not to defeat Sha Tie but to stall for time!

The increasingly intense battle within the battleground attracted everyone's eyes and minds until they did not even make the slightest movement. They were afraid that the moment they were distracted, they would miss a critical part which could affect the entire battle.

Everyone was sweating on the inside as they eyed the sweeping and flashing human figure on the battleground. This battle was really far too much of a stalemate.

Time quietly flowed past like water flowing from the fingertips. Just five minutes after Xun Er and Wu Hao joined hands to defeat a member of the 'Black Demon Group,' the member of the 'Black Demon Group,' who had clenched his teeth and endured until three new students were left finally left had an opening. It was made by a new student who risked being seriously injured and was caught by Xun Er. Hence, as the golden light erupted, one could only hear a muffled sound while a black shadow drew a parabolic curve in midair. The black shadow smashed heavily into the ground. Fresh blood was spat out from his mouth, dyeing the withered leaves bright red.

"Go!" Xun Er once again defeated her opponent with another palm. Some perspiration surfaced on her bright and clean forehead. Without any rest, she cried out softly to the three new students by her side and immediately charged non-stop to the battle circle Hu Jia was in!

Another five minutes passed. Under the loud cheers of the surrounding new students, the last 'Black Demon Group' member, with the exception of Sha Tie, was also completely beaten up by the combination of Xun Er, Hu Jia, and the three new students until he did not have any combat strength left!

Thus far, the situation in the battlefield was such that victory seemed to lean completely one-sidedly toward Xiao Yan's group!

Chapter 452: Bitter and Angry Sha Tie

In the completely destroyed clearing, Hu Jia and the three remaining new students watched as the single remaining member of the 'Black Demon Group' was defeated, and could not help but heave a long sigh of relief. Their legs immediately lost strength as they collapsed to the ground, the sound of them panting like billows echoed repeatedly from their mouths.

Following the defeat of the last member of the 'Black Demon Group,' with the exception of Sha Tie, the spectating students, whose nerves were strained, finally could no longer endure the excitement and wild joy in their hearts. They ignored the injuries on their bodies as they leaped to their feet and wildly shouted. In an instant, various wild shrieks and hollers spread through the air above the empty ground.

Xun Er's delicate hand wiped the perspiration from her forehead. The golden glow emitted from her body also began to dim. These three rescues had caused some difficulty for her. If it were not for the fact that the Qi Method that she practiced was not a low class method, it would have been likely that she would have been like Wu Hao, whose combat strength greatly deteriorated as a result of over exhaustion of his Dou Qi.

Xun Er supported herself by leaning against a tree trunk. She took advantage of this short time frame to catch her breath before sweeping her gaze to the place where Xiao Yan's battle was happening. When she saw that Xiao Yan did not show any signs of becoming defeated despite being forced by his opponent to the point where he faced continuous danger, she heaved a sigh of relief. A smile that caused Su Xiao and the others to feel graced to be in her presence made its way onto her face.

"Xiao Yan's group has already gained the advantage in this fight."

Su Xiao sighed as he recovered from Xun Er's blooming flower-like stunning smile. The expression on his face was extremely brilliant. It was really unexpected that the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition,' which did not have any big incidents after being held for so many years, would

suddenly have an unexpected turn of events that left them stunned this year when they themselves participated. This really caused Su Xiao to be speechless. Originally, he had planned to accumulate some 'Fire Energy' from the new students to enter the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to train for a period of time. In the end, not only did he not obtain any 'Fire Energy,' rather, he ended up losing his. This was really a double whammy.

Leng Bai and Xiu Yan exchanged gazes beside him. Their hearts were a little sad and chaotic as they laughed bitterly. They were really terribly unlucky to have met this kind of situation.

"As long as these fellows devote themselves to training hard within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' for a period of time after they enter the academy, I'm afraid that they will be able to sneak their way into the 'Strong Ranking.'" Su Xiao shifted his body to let himself lean more comfortably against the tree trunk. His gaze was thrown toward Xiao Yan, who was having a heated battle with Sha Tie. These words of his had a sense of marvel that was difficult to hide.

Although he had already viewed Xiao Yan very highly, he did not expect that the latter would actually be able to rely on his own strength to endure this long at Sha Tie's hands. It should be known that Sha Tie was a seasoned veteran in fighting techniques and frequently mingled in the Fighting Arena within the Inner Academy. His fighting experience could be called shrewd and ruthless. Even the lower level Dou Lings with little battle experience would have difficulty defeating him. From this, it could be seen just how rich Sha Tie's combat experience was.

However, it was this person, whose strength was not only a few stars higher than Xiao Yan but whose combat experience was also very seasoned, who was unable to defeat the latter after such a long time. This scene could not help but cause Su Xiao and the rest to feel speechless at Xiao Yan's tenaciousness.

Of course, they naturally did not know that if it were not for the green-colored flame in Xiao Yan's hand causing Sha Tie to suffer greatly, it was likely that Xiao Yan would really have difficulty holding out for this long in Sha Tie's hands without showing any signs of defeat if he just relied on

the strength of his own level.

Leng Bai and Xiu Yan quietly nodded when they heard Su Xiao's words. Thus far, the various things that Xiao Yan had displayed had already far exceeded their expectations. Reaching the level of a six star Da Dou Shi at such an age. This kind of training talent really caused some people to be utterly amazed. None of them had any doubt when it was said that he would be able to enter the 'Strong Ranking' of the Inner Academy.

Xun Er, Hu Jia, and the others rested on the sidelines for two to three minutes before they stood up once again. They exchanged glances with one another and nodded slightly. Gold and green-colored Dou Qi once again surged out of their bodies. Finally, they moved in a similar fashion toward the left and right, surrounding the battle grounds where Xiao Yan and Sha Tie were exchanging blows. Dou Qi extended out and shrunk back into their palms, ready to seize Sha Tie's opening and give him a heavy blow.

The other three new students, on the other hand, could only watch Xun Er and Hu Jia's actions since their Dou Qi was completely exhausted. Currently, they were unable to gather even the slightest bit of strength to go forward and help. Of course, with their strength, they were indeed unable to get involved in this level of battle.

"Clang!"

A fist wrapped in green-colored flame once again heavily collided with Sha Tie's fist which was covered by the dark-golden-colored Dou Qi Armor. A clear clang suddenly sounded.

Xiao Yan's shoulders quivered rapidly as he sensed the powerful force that transmitted from the point of contact between their fist. His muscles fluctuated a little like a water ripple. A green flame suddenly ignited within his black pupils as he inhaled a deep breath of air while a low cry was emitted from Xiao Yan's throat. The Dou Crystal vibrated quickly within the vortex of his body. Wisps of green-colored flame swiftly surged out from that small Acceptance Spirit space, finally moving along his Qi Paths to reach his fist.

“Huh!”

As Xiao Yan’s cry sounded, the green-colored flame on his hand suddenly soared. Finally, it turned into a large cluster of flames that moved along the point of contact between the fist and instantly swept over Sha Tie’s Dou Qi Armor. Immediately, the sound of ear-piercing sizzling repeatedly emitted from Sha Tie’s Dou Qi Armor.

Following the explosive surge of this cluster of green-colored flames, Xiao Yan’s face suddenly became much dimmer. By mobilizing such a large amount of ‘Heavenly Flame’ to attack, it not only consumed a great amount of his Dou Qi, but also placed an immense burden on his Spiritual Strength.

The green-colored flame that suddenly adhered to his body caused Sha Tie’s expression, hidden under the Dou Qi Armor, to change drastically. An extremely high temperature repeatedly permeated through the Dou Qi Armor from outside. At the very least, it grilled Sha Tie’s skin until it was fiery red.

“Dammit! What is this flame exactly?”

Sha Tie let out a soft but furious roar in his heart. Currently Sha Tie was enraged. In the earlier exchanges, each time he was about to strike Xiao Yan’s body, that green-colored flame would take the initiative to pounce toward him, forcing him to pull his hand back. Hence, he could not take advantage of any openings despite this exchange having lasted for more than ten minutes. Instead, he was suppressed by Xiao Yan to the point where he could not even move to win. A moment ago, he had gotten a chance to give a hard punch, something which was difficult to come by. However, that damn flame had coincidentally come sticking onto him. How could he not be angry at this kind of hopelessly stupid battle?

While Sha Tie was furious in his heart, his body was swiftly pulling back. As he did so, anything which he collided with would be instantly be incinerated by the green-colored flame and turned into ashes.

At this moment, Sha Tie had suddenly appeared to have become a green-colored flaming person in other people’s eyes while he repeatedly

randomly fell back.

Even the hard armor on Sha Tie's body, which was like a tortoise shell, was starting to be charred by that green-colored flame until it gradually became pale. Just as the Dou Qi Armor had become vaguely visible, the green-colored flame, which had left Xiao Yan's control, finally extinguished extremely suddenly with a 'xiu' sound.

The perspiration covered Sha Tie sighed in relief at the green-colored flame which had suddenly disappeared. If this flame had lasted a little longer, he did not dare say just how long he could endure with just his flesh should his armor be compromised...

At the same time Sha Tie sighed in relief, he clenched his teeth and lifted his head. He eyed Xiao Yan and involuntarily let out a cold smile when he saw the other party's somewhat dimmed face. However, before his cold laughter was completely transmitted out from his mouth, his expression suddenly stiffened.

Under Sha Tie's gaze, he saw that the originally dim-faced Xiao Yan waved his hand and a jade bottle appeared within his hand. The latter swiftly poured out three round medicinal pills before popping them into his mouth in front of Sha Tie. The initial medicinal strength immediately began to swiftly disperse and the dimness on Xiao Yan's face faded slightly compared to his earlier condition.

After consuming the medicinal pills like one would consume candy, Xiao Yan raised his head and smiled at Sha Tie. He shook both his hands slightly and the green-colored flame, which caused Sha Tie's face to stiffen, exploded out once again. This time around, however, it clearly no longer had the power it did a moment ago. Nevertheless, just this alone still caused the corner of Sha Tie's mouth to twitch.

"Even if this fellow is an alchemist, he didn't need to eat it like that, did he? Do medicinal pills not cost money?" Sha Tie's expression turned a little green. In his heart, however, he felt an incomparable bitterness and anger. It was already shameless to rely on that weird flame to fight. Yet, this fellow actually ate those medicinal pills like candy, using it to recover

the Dou Qi which he had completely exhausted. How was Sha Tie going to fight against this?

“Hee hee...” Xiao Yan laughed when he saw Sha Tie’s expression. His gaze swept toward Xun Er and Hu Jia by the side. A moment later, he lifted his chin and the three of them flashed forward at the same time. The powerful attacks were all headed for Sha Tie. At this moment, the hard tortoise shell like Dou Qi Armor belonging to Sha Tie had basically been cooked by Xiao Yan’s ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ until nothing was left. This was the perfect time to strike!

“Wait!”

The green-colored flame was swiftly overtaking Sha Tie’s field of vision. As he recalled the pain from being burned by that flame earlier, Sha Tie’s face contorted. His gaze swiftly swept over his four companions who had already been defeated and helplessly shook his head. He immediately inhaled a deep breath of air as his voice sounded in the empty forest like thunder, shocking everyone.

Three sharp attacks suddenly stopped just as they were half a meter from Sha Tie. The footsteps of the three of them staggered as they flashed back in an extremely agile manner. Xiao Yan raised his eyebrows and asked with a smile, “What is it?”

“We have lost...”

Sha Tie sighed as he spoke in an extremely helpless manner. With the current situation, he did not think that he had any ability to resist. Of course, if it were not for the green-colored flame in Xiao Yan’s hand suppressing him in every way, he would be able to go all out and fight against three people by himself. Unfortunately...

The helpless voice emitted from Sha Tie’s mouth slowly reverberated within the empty ground of the forest. Under these words, everyone fell into a silence. These sudden words from this fellow admitting his loss were indeed a little too shocking. From the looks of the situation earlier, it appeared that he was suppressing Xiao Yan as they fought. Originally, everyone thought that this battle would become even more intense. In the

end, this silent atmosphere continued for a long while in the empty ground before some of the new students finally recovered. Immediately, thunder-like cheers shook the entire forest until it rustled.

Chapter 453: Distributing The Spoils, Recuperation

Xiao Yan was seated on a rock within the empty clearing. In front of him was a simple wooden table where piles of Fire Crystal Cards were placed orderly. Many of these Fire Crystal Cards had the same number on it.

“2.”

Clearly, the owners of these Fire Crystal Cards had all unluckily met older students and had their ‘Fire Energy’ stolen from them.

Dozens of new students were seated cross-legged in the empty clearing in front of the table. Although their outer appearances were extremely weary and awkward, their eyes were filled with energy. Numerous gazes that carried excitement stared at the pile of Fire Crystal Cards on the table.

On the other side of the empty ground, Sha Tie, Su Xiao, and the others rested against a tree trunk. The expressions on their faces were extremely dispirited. The gazes that they used to look at Xiao Yan on the rock were filled with a certain resentment.

Xiao Yan did not pay much attention to their gazes. His left hand lifted a pale-blue Fire Crystal Card. After which, he repeatedly grabbed a black Fire Crystal Card. He rubbed both of them together and as a light was released, the number on the black Fire Crystal Card swiftly returned to the number when they had entered the forest. Moreover, Xiao Yan added 2 more days to the balance. Finally, the number on these black cards turned from 2 to 7!

What Xiao Yan was currently doing was naturally splitting the spoils, an important matter that would hook people’s heart. Those new students’ Fire Crystal Cards, which had been depleted until there were only 2 days of ‘Fire Energy’ left, were not only replenished by Xiao Yan, but also gained an extra 2 days worth of ‘Fire Energy.’ Xiao Yan also generously gave the lucky ones, who had avoided having their Fire Crystal Cards snatched by

the older student, an extra 5 days of 'Fire Energy'. He clearly understood that if he did not have the assistance of the new students who bravely went all out, it would have been impossible for the few people in his group to complete this task of swallowing Su Xiao's three groups as well as Sha Tie's even stronger group.

Light repeatedly flashed on the table's surface. A long while after this, Xiao Yan finally exhaled and placed the final black Fire Crystal Card down. He turned his head toward Xun Er and Hu Jia by the side and said, "Hand all of these back to their original owners."

Xun Er and Hu Jia nodded their heads when they heard this. They immediately grabbed a bundle of Fire Crystal Cards each and flashed toward the new student group in an agile manner. After which, they returned the various Fire Crystal Cards, which had individual unique markings, back into the hands of those new students with excited faces.

"Ha ha, our 'Fire Energy' is finally back in our hands." Some of the new students hugged their own Fire Crystal Cards with both hands. They could not help but part their mouths and laugh when they saw the number on it.

Xiao Yan smiled slightly as he watched the excitement and joy-filled faces of the new students. He turned his gaze toward Wu Hao, who was meditating with his eyes closed. After the battle was over, he had quickly consumed one more 'Energy Recovery Pill.' Hence, the complexion of the current Wu Hao had improved greatly. The injuries on his body were merely external wounds. Fortunately, he did not injure his Qi Paths or bones. Otherwise, he might have needed to rest for a period of time in order to fully recuperate.

Xiao Yan stood up from the rock and eyed the pale-blue-colored Fire Crystal Cards on the table. After the distribution of the spoils earlier, there was still more than 270 remaining 'Fire Energy' within these Fire Crystal Cards. After distributing these remaining 'Fire Energy' among the four of them, each person would be able to obtain around sixty days worth of it. This harvest could be considered very rich.

After temporarily transferring all the 'Fire Energy' remaining in the pale-

blue cards into his own Crystal Card, Xiao Yan carried them and walked in the direction of the group of people, whose faces were filled with resentment.

“Ke ke, I’m sorry. It would be unjustifiable if I did not give them some sort of reward after requesting their support. Hence, I can only temporarily borrow from the few of you as payment.” Xiao Yan laughed as he spoke. Immediately, the Crystal Cards in his hands shot back to their individual owners as though they possessed a spirit.

“Ah, this time we have made losses all the way to our crotch.” Sha Tie grabbed the Fire Crystal Card with one hand and eyed the balance deposited within it. The corners of his mouth involuntarily twitched as he scolded. In there used to be the result of him fighting within the Fighting Arena for the last two months. In the end, Xiao Yan had actually taken ninety percent of it. How could he not feel his heart ache?

“Ah.” Su Xiao and the others on his sides helplessly sighed. In their hearts, they blamed themselves for being greedy. If it had not wanted to snatch the ‘Fire Energy’ from the new students, how would they have ended up meeting Xiao Yan’s group, who was even more cruel than bandits?

“Ke ke, Senior Sha Tie, can I inquire about something?” Xiao Yan was unconcerned about their expressions as he asked with a smile.

Sha Tie rolled his eyes. His mood was currently extremely bad and was not in the mood to bother about Xiao Yan.

“Twenty days of ‘Fire Energy’ and you tell me the information I want to know. What do you say?” Xiao Yan played with the dark black Fire Crystal Card as he said softly, “If you are unwilling, I can go and ask Senior Su Xiao and the others.”

The corner of Sha Tie’s mouth twitched. He clenched his teeth and said fiercely, “You... just ask!”

The first word was still rather ferocious. However, after he paused for a moment, Sha Tie’s body became relaxed. Currently, to him who had become penniless, even twenty days worth of ‘Fire Energy’ was considered

quite a large amount.

“Can you tell me anything regarding the final ‘White Demon Group’?”

Xiao Yan’s pupils were smiling as he said softly. Currently, their harvest was already so rich that it gave Xiao Yan a heavy feeling. If he wanted to successfully bring this rich harvest into the Inner Academy, he must defeat the final ‘White Demon Group’. Otherwise, he would definitely end up miserably, benefiting others after spending so much effort over the last few days.

“White Demon Group?” Sha Tie lifted his eyebrows. Clearly, he also understood Xiao Yan’s intent. His gaze swept across those new students on the open ground, who were so weak that they had difficulty even standing and continued with a laugh, “The strength of that ‘White Demon Group’ is a little stronger than our ‘Black Demon Group.’”

Sha Tie’s first sentence caused Xiao Yan to frown slightly. Defeating the ‘Black Demon Group’ had already greatly hurt their strength. The so called ‘White Demon Group’ was actually even stronger than them?

“Perhaps the strength of the group members are similar, but the group leader of the ‘White Demon Group’, Luo Hou is a true strong Dou Ling. Although he has only just entered the Dou Ling class less than two months ago, he is much stronger compared to me, who only has half a foot in the Dou Ling class.” Sha Tie curled his lips and said, “It is not that I want to kill your hopes of escape but by relying on this new student group, whose strength has been severely hurt, it is likely that you won’t be able to charge through even if all of you are together.”

Xiao Yan pursed his lips tightly together. A long while later, he said softly, “If these new students are all allowed to completely recover, then it should be possible, right?”

“Adding the few of you, a group of about fifty new students is something that the ‘White Demon Group’ would not be able to block regardless of how strong they are. After all, two palms will have difficulty matching four hands.” Sha Tie shrugged his shoulders. He continued, “Unfortunately, the injuries that these fellows suffer from are quite serious. Without three to

five days, it is difficult for them to fully recover. However, the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' will only last for one week. Hence, you cannot wait until they are completely recovered."

"Ke ke, it's fine as long as it is possible to break through with everyone's strength. As for their injuries..." Xiao Yan smiled slightly toward Sha Tie and continued, "Don't tell me you have forgotten about my identity? Looking from the point of an alchemist, these injuries are not very serious."

Sha Tie was slightly startled when he heard this. He immediately became silent. He had really forgotten this point. Since this fellow was able to control that extremely terrifying flame, it was likely that he was also well versed in his alchemist skills. If he had sufficient medicinal ingredients, he might really be able to heal these new students, allowing them to recover to their peak strength within a short period of time. At that time, when nearly fifty new students charged together, even if Luo Hou was an elite Dou Ling, it was likely that he would only be able to stare at the stampede with a stunned expression.

Xiao Yan clapped his hands and made a little contact between his black Fire Crystal Card and Sha Tie's Crystal Card. As the light flashed, he handed over twenty days worth of 'Fire Energy.' After which, he turned his body and returned to that simple table. He looked at those new students, who were holding their Fire Crystal Card with excited faces and smiled as he said, "Everyone, there is still one last challenge we must face before the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' comes to an end. As long as we are able to successfully charge through them, we will be able to successfully bring the 'Fire Energy' that we have obtained in our hands into the Inner Academy. If we were to fail, then... All the 'Fire Energy' we worked for would end up with the 'White Demon Group.'"

"Fight with them!"

Upon hearing Xiao Yan's words, the emotion of the new students on the empty ground immediately became somewhat agitated. They had just recovered their 'Fire Energy' and now, they knew how to treasure this precious item that was difficult to obtain.

“Ke ke.” Xiao Yan laughed softly. He pressed his hands down in the empty space. Immediately, the noise became quiet. His gaze swept across the place as smiled and continued, “Since everyone has chosen not to give up, let us pour together our strength, and charge into this final challenge together...”

“However, before this, we need to stay here for one day. After one day, I will help everyone completely recover from their injuries. At that time... it will be the last retaliation of us new students!”

“Senior Xiao Yan, we will listen to you!”

With the previous example of them defeating the ‘Black Demon Group’, these new students no longer had any doubt in Xiao Yan’s words. Hence, as Xiao Yan words sounded, numerous cries were released. The orderly tone shook the forest until it rustled.

Off to the side, Sha Tie and the others watched that group of new students rise to action. They could not help but sigh. Although these new students were merely some young wolves who had just grown teeth, the fighting strength they displayed under the leadership of this ferocious lion, Xiao Yan, had already far exceeded everyone’s expectations.

Xiao Yan once again sat cross-legged on the rock. He waved his hand and a medicinal cauldron, along with a large amount of medicinal ingredients appeared on the table in front of him. He flicked his right hand and the green-colored flame flashed into the medicinal cauldron.

The green-colored flame soared and burned in the cauldron within the quiet forest. Numerous medicinal ingredients were all incinerated in the flames and their essences were quietly gathered.

Xiao Yan spent an entire night’s time refining some medicinal pills that could cure internal injuries.

Dozens of human figures, who were sitting cross-legged within the quiet forested area, abruptly opened their eyes at dusk the next day. A glow was quietly deposited. Numerous powerful Qis spread out from within their bodies before agglomerating into an integrated body that spread over the entire forest!

At this moment the new students opened their eyes, Xiao Yan, along with Xun Er, and the other two on the rock also slowly opened their eyes. After resting for an entire day, the three of them had once again recovered to their peak condition with the help of Xiao Yan's medicinal pills.

Xiao Yan stood up from the rock. He glanced at Sha Tie and the rest who were still by the side. After which, he turned around and threw his gaze over to the new students who had recovered their strength. He raised his hands slowly before throwing it down!

“Go!”

As Xiao Yan's voice sounded, dozens of human figures flashed onto the tree branches with a swish sound. With Xiao Yan and the three others leading them, they immediately rushed toward the exit of the forest one after another!

The final decisive battle was about to begin!

Chapter 454: White Demon Group

This empty area was covered with rocks. When the spreading forest met with this rocky region, it ceased expanding. Hence, the sunlight, that scattered down from the sky, did not encounter any obstruction as it poured over the ground. The warmth of the sunlight caused people's body to feel a warm feeling.

Not far away from this rocky region was a mountain slope which swelled up. There were some boulders of various sizes spread across the mountain slope. At this moment, there were quite a number of people either seated or standing above or beside these mountain rocks. These people were quite young, around twenty-four to twenty-five years old. Their clothes may be different, but all of them wore a tower shaped badge on their chest. Clearly, these students were older students from the Inner Academy.

On the other side of the mountain slope, there was a platform which was built upon a huge rock. Two old men were seated on this huge rock. They were actually Elder Su and Elder Qing, whom Xiao Yan and the others had met before they entered the forest. Seated around them were a couple of middle-aged men with calm auras. Clearly, they should be people in charge of various affairs within the Inner Academy.

"Hee hee, I heard that this batch of new students were extremely arrogant? They actually went and robbed the 'Fire Energy' from the older students instead?" A gaze from the top of the mountain slope eyed the slightly dimmed area at the edge of the forest as laughter was being transmitted among themselves.

"Yes. I found out from some of the older student groups who came out of the forest that this time around. There was a group of new students led by someone called Xiao Yan, who appears to be quite strong."

"Chi. They are only finding excuses for their own failures. At any rate, they have at least trained in the Inner Academy for over a year. It is really unexpected that they would lose in the hands of new students. Tsk tsk..."

“Hopefully. I heard that Sha Tie of the ‘Black Demon Group’ has also brought people into the forest. I wonder if they also ran into the new students?”

“Oh? Sha Tie also entered? Then these new students can be considered to be finished. Sha Tie is a strong person who is about to enter the Dou Ling class.”

“That’s right. Their good luck can be considered to have ended here.”

As numerous private whispers were being transmitted all over the place, a few human figures in the rock piles below moved slightly. They immediately opened their eyes slowly as their indifferent gazes swept over the dark forest.

These five human figures simply sat on the messy rocks. Their breathing was long and calm. They did not move because of those private conversations that sounded beside their ears. The five of them wore white-colored clothes, much like their indifferent, ice-cold auras.

Among the five of them, the one with the strongest aura was a young man in the middle, whose complexion was a little white. At this moment, this white-complexioned young man was the only person among the five whose eyes were still shut. He was seated cross-legged on a rock, with his body appearing similar to an ice sculpture. A hint of a cold aura shrouded and actually caused some of the green grass on the rocks to be covered by white frost.

Time slowly flowed past along with the movement of the sun above their heads. Just as these students on the mountain slope thought that they had waited in vain today, there was suddenly the sounds of footsteps coming from within the dark forest. Immediately, everyone braced their spirits. Their gazes all swept toward the forest exit without making any prior agreement. The originally noisy private conversations also completely ceased.

Elder Su and Elder Qing on the rock platform at the top of the mountain slope also slowly raised their heads. They narrowed their eyes as they threw their gazes in the direction where the sound of footsteps originated.

As the atmosphere became quiet, the sound of footsteps being emitted from within the dark forest became increasingly depressing. A long while later, a pair of feet took a step out from the exit of the dark black forest. Quickly following this, twenty human figures slowly walked out. The one leading them was Sha Tie, Su Xiao, and the others.

“Uh? It’s Sha Tie and the others...” The gazes landed on the twenty human figures that had walked out of the forest. Everyone on the mountain slope was startled as they spoke in stunned voices.

“Don’t tell me that they have already finished off the new students?” A hint of doubt flashed across everyone’s heart, Numerous gazes were shot toward Sha Tie and the others who walked out of the forest.

Sha Tie’s twenty man group slowly walked toward the nearest pile of rubble. At this moment, the young man with a pale complexion also slowly opened his eyes. His gaze swept over Sha Tie and the others. A moment later, his face changed slightly. There was an additional seriousness in his indifferent voice.

“All of you were actually defeated?”

Although his voice was soft, it was undoubtedly like exploding thunder that had suddenly roared in the clear sky. It immediately exploded among the Inner Academy students on the mountain slope until they were stunned. Their faces were dull. Twenty strong older students was sufficient enough to sweep over all the new students in a head on battle. However... now that they had heard what the pale-faced young man had said, they were all actually defeated in the hands of the new students?

Although their hearts were extremely shocked, the Inner Academy’s students did not have much doubt over the words spoken by this pale-faced young man. With his ability and sight, it was not difficult for him to see through what happened.

Hence, at this moment, all the students could not help but feel somewhat absent-minded. The current new students were already strong to such an extent?

Sha Tie did not feel surprised that the pale-faced young man saw

through everything at a glance. He waved his hand and helplessly said, "Those fellows are very strong. Their combat experience is also far from what ordinary new students can compare with."

Sha Tie's words once again caused a wave of noise, from the swallowing of saliva, to appear on the mountain slope. Some old students were unable to hide the shock in their hearts as they inhaled a deep breath of cool air. Even the 'Black Demon Group' was defeated by the new students. Was this batch of new students really this abnormally strong?

"Leave the rest of the matter to us. Let me see just how great this group of new students, who have alarmed the entire Inner Academy, are." The pale-faced young man slowly stood up from the rock and straightened his body. A faint coldness suddenly swarmed out of his body as he spoke indifferently.

Sha Tie's gaze carried a little weirdness as he looked at the cold air on the pale-faced young man. A floating arc was lifted from the corner of Sha Tie's mouth. Compared to his own close range combat, this fellow's ice affinity Dou Qi would likely suffer an even greater restraint under that fellow's terrifying green-colored flame.

"Luo Hou, the new students this year are indeed very strong. I think that perhaps this last group of yours is likely unable to stop them." Sha Tie spread his hands and said.

"Move aside. All of you have already lost the qualification to stay here." The pale-faced young man ignored him. His tone was still very calm.

"Alright. I believe that you will soon not have the qualification either."

Sha Tie did not become angry. He laughed coldly. Together with Su Xiao and the rest, he slowly withdrew toward the mountain slope. They had just ascended the mountain slope when a large group of rushing wind noises suddenly sounded from within the dark forest!

Following the appearance of this rushing wind sound, the gazes that were shot at Sha Tie and the others once again turned back to the exit of the forest.

Not long after their gazes shifted, the tree branches within the forest swiftly swayed. Immediately, numerous human figures swiftly flashed out from within the dense forest. Finally, they landed under the sunlight with one knee on the ground. There were many human figures. If one were to carefully count, there were actually no less than forty people. Seeing these numbers, not only did astonished noises sound from the surrounding mountain slope, but the face of the pale-faced young man also changed a little.

“It is really unexpected that there was actually someone who was able to gather all the new students. This is a big move... but who would this person be?” Elder Su sighed in surprise from the rock platform as he eyed the dozens of new students who had appeared. The ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ of the previous years did not lack people who wanted to gather all the new students together to fight as a whole. Due to each of the new students being arrogant, however, there was seldom anyone who was able to successfully achieve this.

“I think... it should be the young man called Xiao Yan. Didn’t that old fellow Hu Gan say that during the Qualifying Competition, this fellow relied on his own strength to defeat three, four, or five new students joining hands...” Elder Qing voiced his thoughts.

Elder Su nodded slightly. He voiced some praise within his heart. This Xiao Yan was indeed a good seedling.

Those new students in front of the rock piles, who had flashed out from the forest, lifted their heads as they swept their gaze across the older students on the mountain slope with eyes containing various kinds of emotion. Finally, they spread out to both sides and opened a small path in the middle.

The new students spread out and the edge of the small path remained directly linked to the exit of the dark forest. Soft footsteps sounded at that spot and four human figures immediately came walking out slowly from the darkness. Finally, they passed through the small path formed by the human crowd before appearing right at the front of the new students.

The one leading them was a black-robed young man who was carrying an enormous black ruler that was nearly as tall as him. He raised his head slightly and his gaze scanned the entire place. Finally, it stopped at the five white-clothed young men on the pile of rocks. He cupped his hands as he asked with a smile, "You seniors should be the final group of this year's 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition,' the 'White Demon Group,' right?"

"White Demon Group leader, Luo Hou." The pale-faced young man's gaze swept across the four of them. It paused on Xun Er and Hu Jia for a moment before it swiftly stared intently at Xiao Yan, who stood in the middle as he slowly spoke.

"New student leader, Xiao Yan." Xiao Yan smiled as he softly spoke by following Luo Hou's manner of speaking.

Luo Hou nodded. The cold air around his body became increasingly dense. A powerful force rose from within his body and shrouded this area filled with piles of rocks. Some of the weaker new students' expressions changed as they could not resist the pressure of this force, which was even greater than Sha Tie's.

Xiao Yan's face became increasingly serious as he sensed the ice cold pressure around his body. It was just as Sha Tie had said. This fellow was a true strong Dou Ling.

As they thought of this in their hearts, Xiao Yan turned his head to exchange glances with Xun Er and the three others. He nodded slightly and the four of them took a step forward at the same time. Immediately, four powerful Dou Qis abruptly surged out of their bodies. The four forces intertwined in midair before finally combining together, blocking the ice-cold force that surrounded their bodies.

As the four of them moved, those dozens of new students also released forces of varying strength. Although their forces could not be compared with any single one in Xiao Yan's group if they were to be looked at individually, the sum of such numbers caused the force to almost immediately become the strongest one present.

With the superimposition of all the new students, including Xiao Yan's

four men group, the permeating ice cold domineering force from Luo Hou basically broke down upon contact. Seeing that their group leader suffered defeat, the other four members of the 'White Demon Group' also hurriedly released their force and together, they finally managed to resist that powerful force from the other side.

In their initial exchange, Xiao Yan's group relied on their numbers to suppress the 'White Demon Group.' The advantage in numbers appeared extremely vivid here.

This victory they had obtained in the clash of their aura also caused the confidence of all the new students to soar. The slight worry that was formed due to Luo Hou earlier was also immediately and totally resolved.

Xiao Yan took one step forward. His gaze stared at Lou Huo, cupped his hands together and asked in a clear voice, "Senior Lou Huo. Could you allow us pass through this final checkpoint?"

Xiao Yan's voice reverberated mightily throughout the place scattered with rocks, causing the entire mountain slope to become quiet.

Luo Hou's expression was indifferent. His eyes similarly stared intently at Xiao Yan. It was a long while later before his mouth moved slightly. One cold word was spat out.

"No!"

At this moment, the atmosphere suddenly solidified as if the arms of everyone were drawn!

Chapter 455: The Final Big Fight!

As the ice-cold word was emitted from Luo Hou's mouth, the entire mountain slope of rocks suddenly became silent. From the ready to fight atmosphere, everyone understood clearly in their hearts that it was likely that today's matter would not end nicely. An intense big fight was inevitable.

Xiao Yan's gaze stared intently at Luo Hou's face. A long while later, he nodded slightly. That voice of his had also become much more cold, "Since Senior Luo Hou is unwilling to let us pass, then we can only offend you."

Xiao Yan's hands slowly held the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler. He immediately and abruptly drew it. A black shadow cut through the air and an intense wind swept away some of the rock fragments in front of him. The ruler was pointed sideways toward the ground. Green-colored Dou Qi surged out from within Xiao Yan's body. Since the matter had already progressed to such a point, they had reached the stage where they could not give up because of any unforeseen change in events. Hence, they were left with no choice but to fight!

Following Xiao Yan's action, Dou Qi also began to swiftly swarm out from the bodies of Xun Er and the two others that stood beside him. Waves of powerful force repeatedly rippled out. Their forces locked on Luo Hou, who stood in the middle, from far away. In order to defeat the enemy, one must first defeat their king. The most troublesome person in this 'White Demon Group' was this Luo Hou. As long as they defeated him, they need not be worried about the others.

"I will block Xiao Yan and the three others. Ye Hao, the four of you stop those new students. Do not spread out when you fight. Although there are many new students, they don't know how to cooperate. As long as you firmly hold yourselves together, and rely on the merging of your four synergetic Dou Qis, you have quite a high chance of victory." A faint, white-colored cold air repeatedly seeped from Luo Hou's body. His gaze glanced at Xiao Yan and the three others before turning to a member of the 'White Demon Group' and spoke. His cold sharp eyes could see the

weakness of the new students with a single glance.

“Yes!” Hearing this, those four members of the ‘White Demon Group’ replied with deep voices. The Dou Qi in their bodies surged, and threads of cold air began to be released from their bodies. From the looks of it, it appeared that all the members of this ‘White Demon Group’ practiced ice affinity Dou Qi.

Xiao Yan was visibly affected as he eyed the cold air around those four people. The strength that was unleashed from the collaboration of Dou Qi of the same affinity would be able to increase significantly. Viewing from this point, the overall strength of the ‘White Demon Group’ was significantly stronger than the ‘Black Demon Group’ lead by Sha Tie. No wonder they were the people who guarded the final checkpoint.

“This Luo Hou actually dares to face four opponents by himself. If this person was not wildly arrogant, then it means that he had some trump cards and hidden strength.” Xiao Yan’s spoke to Xun Er and the other two softly as this thoughts lingered for awhile in his heart, “We do not need to warm up in this battle. Hence, you all don’t need to hold anything back. Try your best to defeat him. Don’t waste even a second or there might be some unforeseen events if we delay any longer.

“Yes.”

The three of them nodded slightly. The Dou Qi in their bodies was like a turbulent flood as it swiftly passed through the Qi Paths in their bodies. A feeling of being filled with strength spread over the bodies of the three of them. In that condition, all they needed was to move a little, the surging Dou Qi would follow their will, and unleash thundering attacks.

Following the Dou Qi of both parties permeating all over their bodies, the tense atmosphere faintly became even sharper.

All the older students on the mountain slope remained quiet. Currently, the ‘White Demon Group’ was the final hurdle in this ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition.’ If even they were unable to block the attacks of the new students, Xiao Yan’s group would perhaps break the curse that the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ was the most bitter period for a new

student before entering the Inner Academy.

“Can Xiao Yan’s group defeat the ‘White Demon Group?’” From one corner of the mountain slopes, Su Xiao watched the two sides giving a tit for a tat below, and could not help but whisper to Sha Tie who sat beside him.

“No matter what happens, they do have a chance and that’s it. I can’t really say much about the others. After all, regardless of whether we are discussing individual strength or the strength of the group, the ‘White Demon Group’ is much stronger than the ‘Black Demon Group’. Xiao Yan and the others were able to defeat us, but they may not gain the advantage when facing the ‘White Demon Group’...” Sha Tie shook his head. He was similarly unclear about the end result and could only give Su Xiao a vague reply.

Su Xiao could only helplessly smile when faced with this vague reply. He turned his head and threw his gaze to the imposingly sharp face near the messy rock piles.

The atmosphere of the messy rocky area, where all the gazes had gathered, was becoming increasingly tense. Everyone’s expressions slowly became solemn. The Dou Qi glow on the surface was extended and contracted, much like the feelings of everyone at the moment, having difficulty calming down.

“Ka...”

A gentle breeze blew past. A rock fragment from the mountain suddenly rolled down and heavily crashed into a rock on another spot. Immediately, it was crushed into pieces.

The sudden clear sound was undoubtedly like throwing a stone into the calm surface of a lake. Immediately, an enormous wave would rise and roll. The dozens of different colored Dou Qis surged out from the messy rocky ground. The hue was beautiful because of the multiple colors. The wildly flowing Dou Qi directly caused the pressure in the area to soar. Some tall and straight green grass bent their bodies from the pressure caused by these Dou Qi.

“Fight!”

As the forces surged, two simultaneous cries were emitted from Xiao Yan and Luo Hou’s mouth without any prior planning. As these two voices sounded, the tense atmosphere suddenly broke!

As the human figures flashed, the low roar, that contained a fiery fighting intent, reverberated without disappearing on the battlefield.

At the moment that the cry sounded, Xiao Yan’s hand suddenly tightened on the hilt of the ruler. His feet violently stomped against the ground and a green-colored energy exploded under his feet. The pressure caused by turbulent energy undulations directly turned Xiao Yan’s body into a black shadow as it shot into the middle of the rocky ground where Luo Hou was standing.

When Xiao Yan’s body moved, Xun Er and the other two behind him followed closely. The gap between the four of them was maintained within a one meter radius. At this distance, the four of them could join hands anytime and anywhere to handle a sharp attack that came from any direction.

“Charge!”

Behind Xiao Yan’s four man group, there was a large group of new students roaring loudly as they charged over. Although their formation was scattered, their force was the strongest one present due to them having so many people.

The expressions on the faces of the four members from the ‘White Demon Group’ were indifferent. They did not feel the slightest fear because of the large numbers and strong imposing manner of Xiao Yan’s group. Their hands shook and four white-colored metal rods, which were five feet long, flashed and appeared. A low cry was emitted as the four people borrowed the force of the metal rods touching the ground to shoot forward. They swiftly shot past Xiao Yan’s four man group. Finally, the four metal rod danced wildly, like the rotating wind, and finally stopped all the remaining dozens of new students behind.

Xiao Yan did not turn his head around when he heard the whirring wind

sound behind him. His gaze stared intently at Luo Hou, whose body was standing straight atop a piece of rock. Xiao Yan gripped the heavy ruler in his hand and immediately used his strength to hack downward. A sharp, green-colored Dou Qi glow immediately exploded out from the ruler.

Releasing Dou Qi into one's surroundings. This was an attacking method representative of a Da Dou Shi. This was similar to a long range attack by a practitioner.

After the green-colored Dou Qi glow appeared, Xun Er and the two others also released three powerful glows. Four glows cut through the obstructions of the air as they carried a violent wind and smashed toward Luo Hou.

Luo Hou's face was indifferent as he eyed the four turbulent Dou Qi projectiles being shot over. His hands trembled a little and a ten foot long cold metal rod, which appeared to be molded from cold ice, flashed and appeared. His hands held the body of the long rod tightly and the tip of the rod pierced out explosively. Immediately, one could see images of the rod repeatedly and continuously appearing in midair. Each rod image solidly smashed into the four glows. After this was repeated for a couple of times, the four glows, which contained powerful forces, were actually scattered forcefully by him. This strength was something that people really marveled at.

"He is indeed worthy of being a strong Dou Ling. What a sharp attack."

This attack of Luo Hou caused Xiao Yan's expression to change slightly. Looking just at this action of defusing these four glows, the strength of this Luo Hou was much stronger than the Junior Sect Leader of the Blood Sect which Xiao Yan had killed back in the 'Black Corner Region.' Of course, part of the reason here was that the Qi Method which that Junior Sect Leader used to raise his strength was too much of a cheap trick. Hence, it resulted in the Dou Qi within the latter's body being superficial. If he were to really fight with someone, that fellow's strength was at the very most at the peak of the Da Dou Shi class.

This thought flashed in his heart and swiftly disappeared as Xiao Yan's

expression became serious. The heavy ruler in his hand let out a 'chi' sound as it cut through the air, transforming into a black shadow that carried a depressing sound. His body moved up and down like a half leap as he viciously hacked at Luo Hou.

“Chi...”

Behind Xiao Yan, an energy palm that contained some gold-colored flames, a long green-colored whip, and a blood-colored heavy sword, also carried their own powerful force as they formed a fan like shape, completely surrounding the area around Luo Hou.

Seeing the concentrated attack of Xiao Yan's four men group below, some of the expressions of the older students on the mountain slope involuntarily changed. This was because they clearly understood in their hearts that if it were them who was receiving the attack, they would likely be defeated the moment of contact.

“These four people are indeed very strong. Especially that black-robed young man...” Some of the hearts of the older students could not resist emitting a sigh. After personally witnessing the attack of these new students, they finally understood why the older students, who had participated in this year's 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition,' had been so miserably defeated. Only at this moment did they come to a sudden understanding. It was not that the strength of the older students participating in the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' was weak, but rather the strength of this year's new students was too strong.

At the moment, this thought was swiftly spinning in the hearts of everyone on the mountain slope, Luo Hou, who had been quietly standing in the battleground without moving, finally made a move. His hands held the cold metal rod tightly. Treads of mist-like cold air spread out from the rod as a cold deep cry sounded.

“Circular Cold Spinning Rod!”

As Luo Hou's cry sounded, the cold air, in the form of a mist, shrouding the cold metal rod immediately rolled and rose. A mysterious arc was formed from the rotation. Immediately, the cold air formed a circular

shaped ice shield under the quick rotations of the cold air, completely wrapping Luo Hou's body within it.

“Bang, bang!”

Four ferocious attacks suddenly landed from above on the ice shield that was formed from the fast rotating metal rod. Immediately, a deep muffled sound resounded throughout the entire messy rocky area.

Powerful forces followed the ice shield and spread downward before they were finally skillfully discharged onto a rock. The rock was immediately cracked, forming numerous crack lines before it exploded into rock fragments with a ‘bang’.

“Get lost!”

Luo Hou's body was bent slightly as a cold cry was emitted from his mouth. The fast spinning cold metal rod suddenly paused. Immediately, the tip of the rod swiftly pierced forward, once again forming afterimages that filled the sky. It viciously struck the weapons of Xiao Yan's four man group. The force that suddenly erupted directly shook the four of them until they hurriedly pulled back two steps.

Fighting against four people by himself, yet not showing any signs of losing. The gap between a strong Dou Ling and a Da Dou Shi was indeed difficult to measure.

“Roar, nice. Show those arrogant new students what skill really looks like!” Seeing that the initial attack of Xiao Yan's four men group failed, cheers immediately sounded on the mountain slope.

Xiao Yan's body somersaulted through the air before immediately landing on a rock. He lifted his head to watch the cold and indifferent Luo Hou before slowly exhaling a breath. The other party's strength was even stronger than he had expected. Moreover, adding this to the fact that a rod specialized in defense, it would likely be very difficult to defeat him within a short time even if the four of them were to join hands.

“What should we do?”

Xun Er and the other two had similarly withdrawn to his side with

frowns on their faces. The tortoise-like defense of the other party caused them to feel like a tiger eating a hedgehog, having no place to start.

Xiao Yan glanced at the chaotic battle circle behind him. He immediately knit his eyebrows tightly together. The strength of the four members of the 'White Demon Group' similarly exceeded his expectations. The four metal rods danced like four metal shields. When the attack of an ordinary new student landed on it, not only was it ineffective but it would also be reflected back by the strange force contained on it.

Hence, within less than five minutes after this fight had begun, there were no less than five new students lying on the ground after their bodies had become weak from having the metal rod touching them. From the looks of it, it appeared that there would be a new student who lost their combat ability around every one minute or so.

The gap between the classes was thoroughly displayed in this battle circle. Nearly over forty Dou Shi class new students were actually unable to do anything against four Da Dou Shi class older students. This kind of great disparity caused people to be unable to help but sigh emotionally.

This fight had only just begun but the situation had already begun to shift away from expectations. This caused Xiao Yan's expression to be a little ugly.

"Those new students are indeed a plate of scattered sand. This year, if it were not for Xiao Yan, who had an extremely great gathering ability, it is likely that they would be like the previous years, being robbed by the older students until they had nothing." On the mountain slope, Sha Tie eyed the dozens of people fighting against four people. Not only did the former group not have any success, but they were instead repeatedly losing more students. Sha Tie could not help but shake his head and give voice to his thoughts.

"Yes."

Su Xiao and the others beside him nodded. The overall strength of this year's new students was not much stronger than previous years. However,

in the previous years, a person like Xiao Yan, who had the courage and resolution to gather all the new students, did not appear. However, even if that were the case, just an incomplete group of people did not have adequate strength to fight against the 'White Demon Group', the strongest tiger blocking their path.

"This battle cannot be dragged out for too long. The longer it is dragged, the more disadvantageous it is for Xiao Yan's group. Seeing the performance of those new students, it was clear that it was impossible for them to surround and defeat the 'White Demon Group.' Instead, if it continues like this, in at most twenty minutes or so, they will be completely finished off. At that time, once the members of the 'White Demon Group' free up their hands, Xiao Yan's group will have no opportunities to turn things around." Sha Tie helplessly said. Although he thought highly of that strange, green-colored flame that Xiao Yan used, regardless of how that flame suppressed Luo Hou ice affinity Dou Qi, the superb rod techniques the latter used was still able to block them. It appeared that it was a little too early for him to be gloating earlier.

During the time that Sha Tie and the others were discussing the situation that Xiao Yan's group faced, Xiao Yan had similarly discovered this point. He let out a long sigh and said, "Looks like we cannot delay any longer."

"Chi!"

Xiao Yan inserted the heavy ruler violently into the crack line of the rock. He turned his head toward Xun Er and the two others before saying in a deep voice, "Delay him. Buy me some time!"

Once he said these words, Xiao Yan flicked his finger. A purple-colored Yaowan shot into his mouth. He chewed slightly and immediately spat out a cluster of purple flames in front of everyone's gazes. The flame landed in his palm.

TL: Danwan/Yaowan – pill shape items that have no medicinal effect and can be potentially dangerous to consume.

Seeing that Xiao Yan had actually spat out a cluster of purple-colored

essence flame, the mountain slope immediately went into an uproar. Sha Tie and the others, who originally felt regretful at the disadvantage Xiao Yan's group was facing also had stunned expressions. They did not expect that other than the green-colored flame, Xiao Yan actually had another purple-colored flame...

Elder Su and Elder Qing on the rock platform also raised their eyebrows in shock at this moment.

Xiao Yan ignored the noise from the entire place. He tightly held the purple-colored flame with his left hand while he slowly raised his right hand. His finger twisted a little and the elegant green-colored flame once again let out a throbbing sound, and turned into a cluster of green flames, which stopped above his right hand.

Following the appearance of the green-colored flame, the temperature of this region suddenly rose.

The two colored flames, that were soaring shined onto those stunned faces, causing the scene to appear especially comical.

"This... This is..."

The expressions of Elder Su and Elder Qing, who were leisurely leaning against the backs of their chairs on the rock platform, suddenly changed the instant that the green-colored flame appeared. Their bodies suddenly straightened and their eyes stared intently at the elegant green flame. A moment later, they exchanged glances with one another and saw shock in each other's gazes. "Heavenly Flame?"

Their knowledge was naturally far from what Sha Tie and the rest could compare with. Hence, the moment that the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' appeared, the two of them were able to recognize the exact details of it.

"This damned Hu Jia. He actually did not even tell us about such important information. What a muddle-headed old man..." The shock in their eyes still remained as Elder Su and Elder Qing muttered to each other.

Luo Hou eyes stared intently at the two colored flames in Xiao Yan's

hands. His usual cold and indifferent expression finally became extremely solemn. As he practiced ice affinity Dou Qi, he was extremely sensitive to the change in temperature. The moment the green-colored flame appeared, he was basically shocked to discover that the ice-cold Dou Qi in his body had actually become sluggish!

“What is that flame? It can actually affect the flow of the Dou Qi in my body?”

On top of the solemnity on Luo Hou’s face, there was an additional astonishment. His hands held the cold metal rod tightly as he used great effort to force his Dou Qi to flow, trying his best to get rid of that clogged feeling.

Seeing the two different colored flames in Xiao Yan’s hands, Xun Er and the other two understood his intentions. They nodded and the three of them immediately formed a triangle-shaped formation and explosively shot toward Luo Hou. Their Dou Qi surged wildly and they actually unleashed the Dou Qi in their bodies to the limit.

Luo Hou did not dare to slight the sharp attack of Xun Er’s three man team. Although he was extremely fearful of Xiao Yan behind them, he could only wave the cold metal rod in his hand at this moment and receive all of the attacks from the three of them. After which, he performed his fiercest counter attack, hoping to defeat the three of them in the shortest amount of time. At that time, the fighting strength of Xiao Yan, who had lost his companions, would be severely reduced.

Of course, his idea was good but Xun Er’s three man team was not like those ordinary new students. After a few days of collaborating against their enemies, they had already trained until there was an understanding in their cooperation. Although the three of them were unable to break through Luo Hou’s metal rod defense, even after working together, they were at least able to cause him to be unable to move his body to disturb Xiao Yan.

With Xun Er’s group delaying Luo Hou, Xiao Yan’s palms had already began to gradually make contact in front of everyone’s gazes. Seeing this

action of his, the older students of the Inner Academy might not have felt anything, but the expressions of Elder Su and Elder Qing on the rock platform changed drastically. With their experience, they naturally clearly understood just what kind of immense force would be formed when such flames merged...

“This crazy fellow... should we act to stop him?” Elder Qing muttered. He immediately turned his head and asked Elder Su by his side.

Elder Su knit his brows tightly together. His eyes did not blink as he stared at Xiao Yan’s calm and quiet face. A moment later, he shook his head and said, “He seems to have some confidence...”

“How can this be? Even if one was an elite Dou Huang, one would not dare to do such a thing. Once he loses control and an explosion occurs, the destructive force released is more than frightening...” Elder Qing said in a deep voice.

“Let’s watch...” Elder Su’s gaze did not make the slightest movement. All he did was merely speak in a soft voice.

“You... ah...” Seeing this, Elder Qing could only helplessly sigh. The boundless Dou Qi in his body also began to circulate, ready to handle any sudden and unexpected situations. After all, there were many students here observing the fight.

Under the focus of all the gazes, the green-colored flame in Xiao Yan’s hand finally made contact with the purple-colored flame. Immediately, wisps of green and purple flame seedlings began to swiftly spread out from the point of contact. At the spot where the two made contact, the space seemed to be torn apart by the powerful strength until it began to fluctuate.

Xiao Yan’s expression was indifferent as he eyed the two different colored flames, which were intertwined with one another. He heavily clapped his hands together, appearing as though he had done this hundreds of times. Following a clear muffled sound, the two flames were forcefully merged into a cluster of a green and purple flame. Spiritual Strength swarmed out from his brow, maintaining it at a mysterious

equilibrium.

The green-purple flame repeatedly appeared distorted and immediately began to swiftly shrink in Elder Su's and Elder Qing's shocked gazes. It finally came to a slow stop after it had shrunk to around the size of a fist. The flame moved slightly before finally slowly broke apart. An extremely beautiful green-purple fire lotus drifted in front of Xiao Yan.

"Xun Er, all of you move aside."

The green-purple flame was suspended half an inch above Xiao Yan's palm. His expression was a little pale as he commanded them softly.

As Xiao Yan's words sounded. Xun Er and the two others, who were bitterly engaged in a stalemate with Luo Hou, immediately flashed and pull back. In a few leaps, they appeared behind Xiao Yan.

"It's over..."

Xiao Yan lifted his head slowly and watched the horrified face of Luo Hou. A cold smile appeared on his pale face as he gently flicked the Fire Lotus out of his palm. The Fire Lotus immediately drew past the long empty air like a falling star. Under the focus of everyone's eyes, it carried a beautiful green-purple trail as it shot explosively toward Luo Hou.

Chapter 456: Triumph!

The green-purple fire lotus swiftly expanded in Luo Hou's eyes. The terrifyingly hot energy, which penetrated the air and swept over him, caused the cold sweat appearing on his forehead to be vaporized in an instant.

On the ground, the dark green grass quickly withered anywhere the fire lotus swept past. Finally, the grass turned into black-colored ashes that scattered with the wind.

A horror of being helpless to fight the destructive force quietly rose in Luo Hou's heart as he sensed it shooting explosively toward him. This kind of energy was really too large. He even had a faint intuition that if he were to be struck head on by that beautiful fire lotus, it was likely that he would be turned into nothing more than dust, just like the green grass.

Luo Hou's teeth firmly bit his lips. Blood traces flowed down from his mouth. The pain caused Luo Hou to recover from that helpless state and become a little more alert. His hands held the cold metal rod tightly while his eyes stared intently at the fire lotus, which was coming increasingly closer to him. The latter's nearly lightning-like speed caused him to have nowhere to hide.

Cold air swiftly seeped out from the cold metal rod. However, when the cold air appeared, it was incinerated by the high temperature that moved forward it until it let out a 'chi chi' sound. Finally, it resulted in a white, misty fog that shrouded the messy rock area, causing everyone's sight to be somewhat obstructed.

Luo Hou inhaled a deep breath of air. A crunching sound emitted from the cold metal rod that he held tightly in his hand due to the great strength he used. A drop of cold sweat moved along his forehead and dripped into his eyes. The astringent-like feeling caused a fury to suddenly swarm into Luo Hou's heart. A dignified strong Dou Ling had actually nearly given up defending because of the attack of a mere Da Dou Shi? This kind of situation caused the him, who had a haughty character, to

feel ashamed.

“Come! I want to see just how strong you, Xiao Yan, can be?!” A low, deep roar reverberated in his heart. Luo Hou’s hands shook. Immediately, his ten foot long cold metal rod shook and formed a couple of afterimages. Dou Qi in his body flowed wildly as it was unceasingly poured into the cold metal rod.

As the Dou Qi was swiftly poured in, one could see that layers of thick frost had begun appearing on the ice-like metal rod. Moreover, the temperature surrounding the rod’s body had also begun to swiftly decline at this moment. Finally, it barely managed to isolate the heat from the fire lotus.

The Dou Qi in his body was swiftly flowing until it was exhausted. The frost on the cold metal rod became increasingly rich. In a few blinks of an eye, the cold metal rod, which was originally only as thick as an arm, suddenly gained nearly half a foot of thickness. It was now like an enormous ice pillar.

Luo Hou’s arms hugged the cold metal rod which had turned into an ice pillar. a sleek redness swarmed onto Luo Hou’s face. He let out a low, deep violent roar from his mouth and raised the enormous ice pillar high up before immediately smashing it down angrily!

The force that was contained within the ice pillar was extremely powerful. In the short distance, there was a continuous stream low explosive sounds that were emitted in the air wherever the ice pillar passed through. In fact, when the ice pillar was still a few meters from the ground, the attack which had gathered all of Luo Hou’s strength managed to even pass through the air and shook the rocks on the ground until quite a number of crack lines were formed. From this, it could be seen that Luo Hou’s desperate attack was also not ordinary.

The green-purple fire lotus cut through the air and struck toward Luo Hou. When it was less than two to three meters away, an enormous dark shadow that contained a cold wind descended from the sky. Finally, it heavily struck the fire lotus. Immediately, the space solidified for an

instant. Soon after, a loud thunderclap, like an explosive thunder, resounded throughout the battlefield. Some of the people who were unable to prepare in time were even shaken by this loud sound until their ears were pressed tightly.

After this thunderclap, the energy ripple that everyone had expected to form from the energy collision did not appear. The fire and ice appeared to be quietly neutralized within that rubble-filled region covered by a faint white mist. Not the slightest ripple that contained any destructive force was emitted. This somewhat bizarre scene caused many people to be a little stunned. They faced one another with faces that were at loss.

At this moment, Luo Hou's face was flushed within the white fog that people's gazes could not reach. His palms desperately held the cold metal rod, which was shaking repeatedly. At this moment, the thick frost on the body of the rod was melting at a rate visible to the naked eye. Since his palm was in contact with the rod, Luo Hou could sense an extremely frightening hot force was continuously invading through the cold metal rod from that obscure white fog. Luo Hou was able to imagine that once the icy frost that had been agglomerated from his Dou Qi was completely exhausted, that frightening hot force would completely erupt!

Although Luo Hou understood this in his heart, he did not have the slightest solution. Hence, he could only watch with his own eyes as the enormous ice pillar, which was agglomerated from the cold metal rod, melted swiftly. The heat that was transmitted from the tip of the rod was also becoming increasingly warmer.

The icy frost on the cold metal rod lasted for merely ten seconds before it was completely melted. Following the disappearance of all the icy frost, one could see that the cold metal rod, with an entire body like ice, turned from snow white into fiery red at an extremely swift rate.

“Chi...”

The spot where Luo Hou's hands held the cold metal rod suddenly revealed a white-colored fog and many strange sound. Quickly following this, one could hear a muffled groan that contained pain from Luo Hou.

He swiftly released his hands and threw away the cold metal rod, which had nearly become burning charcoal.

As the cold metal rod landed on the ground, it heavily smashed on top of a rock. In an instant, the rock burst apart. The fiery red rod's temperature was swiftly reduced. Immediately, it turned into an ordinary metal rod. Additionally, there were crack lines that were repeatedly spreading throughout the metal rod. Clearly, this cold metal rod, which seemed to cost quite a lot, had been completely turned into a lump of scrap metal.

At this moment, Luo Hou did not have the time to feel any heartache about his weapon being turned into scrap metal. This was because at the instant when that the metal rod left his hand, he could clearly see a wisp of purple-green fire glow suddenly shooting toward him from within the white fog. The hot aura incinerated the white fog around it into nothingness.

As some of the white fog was being incinerated, Luo Hou could clearly see the true face of that purple-green object. Shock involuntarily flashed across his eyes. He had discovered that the attack, which he had went all out to unleash earlier, had merely cause the appearance of this beautiful fire lotus to become a little dimmer. Its original body actually did not show the slightest signs of wavering!

"Just what class is this Dou Technique in? It is actually strong to such an extent?" On top of being shocked within his heart, Luo Hou, who did not have the time to dodge, could only clench his teeth and hurriedly maneuver the little Dou Qi within his body. After which, he agglomerated and formed a simple, thin Dou Qi Armor on his body. From the looks of it, it appeared that he was prepared to receive it head on.

Xiao Yan's expression was similarly pale as he stood in the messy rock area. His gaze coldly eyed the area which was covered by the white fog. He raised his hands, paused slightly before suddenly clenching it. Immediately, his originally pale face became as white as sheet. His body also involuntarily quivered.

The instant that Xiao Yan clenched his fist, the expressions of Elder Su

and Elder Qing on the rock platform finally changed drastically. Elder Su suddenly stood up. His body paused before immediately disappearing in a bizarre manner from the rock platform.

“Bang!”

A deep, low explosion sounded from the messy rocky region. Immediately, a circular terrifying energy ripple began spreading out in a wave-like manner. Rocks were completely obliterated into dust anywhere it passed. This frightening destructive strength caused the older students on the mountain slope to become dull for a moment. Immediately, under a panicked loud cry, they began to leap over the other side of the mountain slope one after another in an extremely embarrassing fashion, just like rolling gourds. In an instant, the entire place had turned totally chaotic.

The energy ripple had arrived quickly and left just as quickly. When it came into contact with the mountain slope, it left half inch long crack lines before it gradually disappeared. After this continued for a while, the people behind the mountain slope finally carefully exposed their heads one at a time when they ceased hearing any activity. They eyed the area which had already turned into an extreme mess and involuntarily inhaled a breath of cold air in a quiet fashion.

Currently, the messy rocky area or, perhaps, it should no longer be called a messy rocky area. This was because there was no longer a single rock existing in this place. The only thing it had now was rock ashes that covered the ground. The large rocks from earlier appeared to have disintegrated due to the energy ripple with immense destructive strength.

“This... this was created by Xiao Yan?” Everyone’s eyes carried a little dullness as they stared at the messy rock area, which appearance to have changed drastically. Sha Tie, whose head had been exposed from behind a mountain slope, could not help but swallow his saliva and mutter.

Su Xiao and the two other beside him stiffened their faces and nodded. Their gazes swept toward the skinny black-robed young man. In their hearts, they could not resist thinking that if this fellow were to have thrown the purple-green fire lotus when they were fighting within the

forest, how many people in their groups would have survived?

When they thought of this, cold sweat began to appear all over their bodies. The gazes they used to look at Xiao Yan were like they were looking at a monster. Was that fellow really only a Da Dou Shi?

“Is this fellow really a Da Dou Shi? This kind of destructive strength is sufficient to catch up with some six or seven star elite Dou Lings...” Sha Tie recovered from his shock. He laughed bitterly as he slowly gave voice to what Su Xiao and the two others were thinking.

Hearing this, Su Xiao and the other two nodded their heads, sharing the same feelings.

“That’s right... What happened to Luo Hou?”

A voice suddenly sounded from the mountain slope. Immediately all the gazes suddenly turned toward the area in middle of the messy rocky area still covered by white mist.

As everyone turned their gazes, most of the white-colored fog in that region began to dissipate. Finally, Luo Hou’s figure was the first to appear in everyone’s gazes... At this moment, Luo Hou was basically sitting with his butt down on the ground. That cold and indifferent face was currently in a kind of stiffened condition. However, looking at his appearance, it seemed that he was not injured?

Seeing Luo Hou unharmed, a wave of shocked private conversations sounded from the mountain slope. From the looks of the destructive strength of the energy ripple that had spread out, Luo Hou’s strength should not have been enough to leave him totally unaffected.

However, just as everyone’s hearts were filled with doubt, the white-colored fog finally completely disappeared. Following the disappearance of the fog, one could see Elder Su’s body standing in front of Luo Hou...

“Elder Su?” The people on the mountain slope immediately let out numerous gasps as they eyed Elder Su’s figure.

The old figure of the one called Elder Su had his hand maintained in an extended stance. From the looks of the huge pit in front of him, it

appeared that the fire lotus attack earlier was blocked by him. No wonder Luo Hou was not the least bit injured...

Elder Su stood in a straight manner on the spot, like a tree stump. A long while later, he slowly withdrew his hand with an indifferent face. After his hand had returned to his sleeves, it could not resist trembling a little. A solemnness flashed across his turbid eyes.

Elder Su lifted his head under everyone's gazes and swept his gaze toward the pale-faced Xiao Yan. He was quiet for a moment before his soft voice resonated from this battlefield which had undergone a great battle.

"Little fellow, you new students can be considered the victors for this year's 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition.'"

Chapter 457: Reward

Elder Su's somewhat old voice slowly reverberated, causing all the fights to pause at this moment. Those older students of the Inner Academy on the mountain slope opened their mouths slightly. They wanted to say something, but they were unable to say anything.

“Oh!”

The silence outside the forest continued for a while before those unmoving students could no longer resist the wild joy in their hearts. They let out a loud cheer. In their excitement, some of the new students did not even care about gender as they hugged the companions who stood beside them. Their five to six days of difficult struggles had finally paid off. How could they not rejoice?

A smile also surfaced on Xiao Yan's pale-white face as he heard the happy cries that sounded from behind him. He held his chest and softly coughed a couple of times. He turned his head and eyed Xun Er and the other two, whose faces were also filled with joy. With a smile, he said, “Looks like we do not need to hand over the things that we worked hard to come by,”

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, are you alright?” Xun Er hurriedly took two steps forward when she saw Xiao Yan's expression. She supported him and asked with heartache.

“It's nothing. I am just out of strength.” Xiao Yan waved his hand. The power of the ‘Angry Buddha Lotus Flame’ was not small, and its consumption of Spiritual Strength and Dou Qi was really too great. With Xiao Yan's current strength, he could only use it once in his prime condition. If he tried to forcefully use it a second time, he might descend into an unconscious state due to the exhaustion of his strength.

“It is really unexpected that you really have some tricks. No wonder Xun Er constantly bore you in mind. It really is a pity...” Hu Jia carelessly patted Xiao Yan's shoulders. Fighting side by side was usually the best way to improve the relationship between people. After these few days of living

together, her heavy grudge that was formed because of Xiao Yan's tough attack during the Qualifying Competition had completely disappeared. From the bottom of her heart, the various things that Xiao Yan had shown these few days had really let her admire him.

"Xun Er's sight is indeed not bad. However... I will work hard to catch up to you in terms of training." Wu Hao raised his head and his mouth pulled a somewhat stiff arc toward Xiao Yan. Clearly, this battle crazy person, who had a withdrawn character and was excessively obsessive in training, had seldom given anyone else a smile.

Xiao Yan smiled. He laughed and said, "Don't push all the credit onto me. I know my own strength. Without your help, I would not be able to make it this far regardless of how strong I am. A lonely hero would not be able to walk far here and is also not suitable to be here."

Hu Jia and Wu Hao quietly nodded when they heard this. Not being proud because of success. The insolence and wild arrogance that a young person usually possessed seemed to be unrelated to this precocious young fellow. This trait really caused them to marvel.

"Elder Su, we have not lost!"

Just as Xiao Yan was speaking, a dissatisfied voice suddenly sounded out. Everyone's gaze swept around. It was actually emitted from Luo Hou, who was seated with his butt on the ground. At this moment, the latter's face was still flushed red. Clearly, his pride could not accept being defeated by the hands of a Da Dou Shi.

"That's right. We have not lost. We can still fight!"

The other four members of the 'White Demon Group' also cried out together, echoing their leader after hearing him speak. From the appearance of the earlier fight, as long as they were given enough time, the new students would be completely defeated. Therefore, they were naturally unwilling to end up receiving a situation where they had lost.

"All of you shut up!" Elder Su's expression was solemn as he cried out coldly.

Seeing that Elder Su had become angry, everyone hurriedly and wisely shut their mouths. They dared not say anything, including Luo Hou.

“If I had not intervened earlier, would you still have a life to be sitting here?” Elder Su turned his head around, and asked Luo Hou sternly, whose face was filled with dissatisfaction.

Luo Hou’s expression turned white. He clenched his teeth, but became dispirited a moment later. He clearly knew that if Elder Su had not intervened, it was likely that the Inner Academy would no longer have a student called Luo Hou.

“A loss is a loss. What excuse do you need to find?” Elder Su snorted coldly. His gaze looked all around him as he said in a deep voice, “I have already said that the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ this time around is already over. If you are still not satisfied, you can directly issue a challenge to the new students one month after they enter the Inner Academy. As long as they agree, the Fighting Arena of the Inner Academy is open anytime. However, for now, all of you should shut your mouths.”

“Hmph.”

Elder Su glanced once at Luo Hou before sweeping his gaze over at Xiao Yan’s group once again. Only then did his expression become softer as he said, “As the victors of this year’s ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition,’ all the new students present will each obtain twenty days of ‘Fire Energy.’ Xiao Yan, Xiao Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao will each obtain an additional ‘Green Fire Crystal Card’ and thirty days of ‘Fire Energy.’”

“Green Fire Crystal Card?”

There was some noise from the mountain slope upon hearing the words that had popped out of Elder Su’s mouth. Numerous envious gazes swept over Xiao Yan’s four man group.

“‘Green Fire Crystal Card?’ What is that?” Xiao Yan’s four man group, however, were somewhat at a loss with regards to this so-called ‘Green Fire Crystal Card.’ They exchanged glances with one another, feeling a little uncertain.

“Ke ke. Within the Inner Academy, the Fire Crystal Cards, from the bottom to the top, are divided into black, blue, green, red, and purple colors. The black-colored Crystal Card in your hands is the lowest grade Crystal Card. This kind of Crystal Card can only give you the qualification to train in the first and second levels of the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ The blue card has the qualification to enter the third and fourth level and it continues on like this.”

“If one wanted to raise the Crystal Card grade, one would need to exchange for it with ‘Fire Energy’ within the Inner Academy. Usually, one would need to pay a hundred days worth of ‘Fire Energy’ to exchange the black-colored Crystal Card to a blue-colored Crystal Card. In order to change a blue-colored Crystal Card to a green-colored Crystal Card, one would need two hundred days of ‘Fire Energy’... Now that you have obtained the ‘Green Fire Crystal Card’ as a reward, it is equivalent to you saving three hundred days of ‘Fire Energy’. This is not a small sum. Among the older students of the Inner Academy present, most of them are currently holding a blue-colored Crystal Card, with the exception of Luo Hou, who coincidentally changed his blue-colored Crystal Card to a green-colored Crystal Card last week.” Elder Su smiled and explained after seeing the doubt of Xiao Yan and the others.

“Three hundred days worth of ‘Fire Energy?’ Only after hearing this number did Xiao Yan and the others understand why the gazes of those around them were filled with envy. They had snatched from all of the older students in the forest until the latter were left with nothing. Adding that to this reward, each of their Crystal Cards had only just exceeded a hundred. From this, it could be seen that there should be some difficulty obtaining ‘Fire Energy’ within the Inner Academy.

Once Elder Su had finished explaining, he shook his hand and four green-colored Crystal Cards appeared in his hand. He flicked his finger and the cards shot toward Xiao Yan’s four man group, finally coming to a suspended stop in front of them.

“The reward is already in there. Draw all the ‘Fire Energy’ in your Black Crystal Cards over. After that, hand the Black Crystal Cards back to me.”

Xiao Yan and the others quickly did as they were told when they heard what he said. A moment later, they handed over their Black Crystal Cards, which had become empty, over to Elder Su.

Elder Su nodded slightly when he received the black-colored 'Fire Crystal Cards.' He smiled and said, "Alright. Since you have already successfully completed the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition,' follow me into the Inner Academy." Once he finished speaking, he took the lead to turn around, and slowly walked toward a stairs made of rock fragments that led up the mountain slope.

"We can finally enter the Inner Academy... it truly wasn't easy. Ah." Xiao Yan let out a long sigh when he saw Elder Su's back. He did not know just how much effort they had used in order to enter the Inner Academy. First, there was the Qualifying Competition, then there was the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition.' This Inner Academy... was indeed not as easy to enter as he had thought.

"Let's go."

Under everyone's gazes, Xiao Yan waved to Xun Er and the others and lead the way, following behind Elder Su as he climbed up the stairs.

The fragmented rock stairs could not be considered to be very high. Xiao Yan's group managed to ascend to the last step after merely one to two minutes. After which, they raised their bodies and stood at the peak of the mountain slope. Their gazes swept around once in front of them. The scene, which appeared in front of them, caused them to slowly inhale a breath of somewhat icy-cold air.

"This is the Inner Academy?" A soft mutter was emitted from the mouths of those new students on the mountain slope.

Behind the mountain slope was an extremely big basin with a depression. The shape of this basin was like it had been smashed and formed from an enormous rock falling from the sky...

Tall buildings stood within the basin. Looking down from high above, everyone was able to see numerous, flea-like shadows flashing and jumping above the buildings. Their gazes focused in front of them, only to

realize that the size of this basin was strangely large. The edge of their sight could only see the tall buildings and a lush green color but not the other side of the basin.

It was difficult to imagine that there was actually such a unique ground hidden within the endless mountains behind the Jia Nan Academy.

“Ke ke, little fellows, welcome to the place where the core of the Jia Nan Academy is located: The Inner Academy!” Elder Su smiled as he eyed the shocked faces of the new students as he clapped his hands and spoke.

“The strong people here... so many.” A fanatic enthusiasm rose on Wu Hao’s face as he whispered to himself.

Xiao Yan helplessly smiled when he heard this. This fellow was really without a doubt a fighting maniac...

Xiao Yan lifted his gaze and slowly swept it across the enormous basin. A moment later, he inhaled a deep breath of air as he muttered in his heart, “Fallen Heart Flame... is it really here? Hopefully, you will not disappoint me.”

“Alright. Since the ‘Hunting Competition’ has concluded, all the new students, follow me back to the Inner Academy. I will help you all settle in. After that, you will all truly be members of the ‘Inner Academy.’ Trust me. As long as you are able to persist here, you will feel that everything is worthwhile when you see your improvements when you finally leave this place.” Elder Su’s gaze paused on Xiao Yan’s group as he slowly said.

All the new students nodded lightly. From those older students, they were able to discover just what kind of great benefits they would obtain if they trained in this Inner Academy!

“Let’s go! Everyone, follow closely!”

Elder Su waved his hand. His body turned into a vague shadow as he swiftly rushed toward the enormous basin. Behind him, all the new students also immediately moved their bodies. Like locusts in transit, they rushed down from the mountain slope. Numerous excited bellows lingered over this place and did not disappear for a long time.

Chapter 458: Settling In

“Creak.”

A wooden door was slowly pushed open. A thread of sunlight passed through the gap and spread out, finally forming a narrow and long line of light on the ground.

As the wooden door was completely pushed open, the line of light swiftly expanded. Immediately, a few human shadows, which were pulled by the sunlight until their length was no longer proportional also entered. The leader, an old man, swept over the spacious small pavilion home smiled and said, “Xiao Yan, this will be the residence of the four of you in the future.”

“Four of us?”

Hearing this, Hu Jia, who was following behind, could not help but be startled. She immediately said in a stunned voice, “Elder Su, don’t tell me that you want Xun Er and I, two girls, to stay with these two big men?”

“Ke ke, Hu Jia girl, this pavilion home is fairly large and there are quite a number of rooms. It is not like we are asking you to sleep in the same bed. What are you so anxious of?” Elder Su smiled and shook his head. His gaze moved over the four of them as he continued, “That’s right. You all have another group member right?”

“Uh...” Xiao Yan was a little sluggish when he heard Elder Su’s question. He shrugged his shoulders, not quite knowing how to answer.

“He ran... he saw the powerful strength of the ‘Black Demon Group,’ thus he abandoned us and fled.” Hu Jia spread her hands and laughed coldly. She did not have the same concerns that Xiao Yan had. Her words did not leave any face for Bai Shan. Clearly, the actions of Bai Shan in abandoning his companions and fleeing by himself caused her to hold him in great contempt.

“Ran away? What a short-sighted person.” Elder Su was also startled. He immediately shook his head and spoke with a faint smile.

“In the future, the four of you will belong to the Inner Academy. I will remind you that unless your strength is extremely strong, it is not easy to muddle along within the Inner Academy all alone. Due to what the environment encourages, all the older students in the Inner Academy are divided into factions and territories. I think that you will understand these things soon.” Elder Su voiced his thoughts.

“The Inner Academy actually has such things? Why don’t you all put a stop to it?” Hu Jia’s knit her eyebrows together and asked.

“Ke ke, why should we put a stop to it? This kind of competition is what our Inner Academy needs and wants. If you don’t want to be bullied, you need to work hard to raise your strength. Otherwise, everything is out of discussion... the strong are respected. This will forever be the tune of this world. We do not want to let the Inner Academy become an Ivory Tower where everyone is carefree. This is because such an environment would not produce truly strong people.” Elder Su faintly replied.

Hu Jia could only curl her lips when she heard Elder Su’s explanation. Xiao Yan and Wu Hao nodded their heads in approval. They had undergone true temperament, and clearly understood just what kind of environment could create a truly strong person.

“Hence, by letting you stay together, we actually want you to form a group. In the Hunting Competition, you should all have understood just what kind of fighting strength a group can create, no?” Elder Su smilingly said, “From today on, I hope that the four of you can face all your difficulties together and become a group that does not abandon each other. If all of you are able to do this, your life in the Inner Academy will be much more relaxed. No matter the case, a person’s strength cannot be compared to a group’s strength right?”

“I am fine with it. I have no objections to Xiao Yan’s strength.” Wu Hao hesitated for a moment before nodding slightly and speaking with a faint voice.

Xun Er laughed gently. She would naturally not object to being together with Xiao Yan.

“Ah, alright. Although I don’t want to admit it, following this fellow does indeed make me feel safer.” Hu Jia spread her hands, nodded helplessly and gave voice to her reply.

“All of you are relying on me...”

Xiao Yan could not help but laugh bitterly when he saw their actions. Although the expression on his face was like this, there was a strange feeling within his heart. He was all alone during the nearly three years of training. Perhaps it was as his character dictated but he had gotten used to facing his struggles alone. However, seeing the manner in which Wu Hao and the other two handed over command of their group, it was undoubtedly a form and showing of trust and acceptance. This kind of feeling was something that Xiao Yan never had when he trained alone in the past.

“Ke ke, it is naturally for the best if all of you can act in this matter.” Elder Su nodded with satisfaction when he saw that the four people had come together to form a group without any hesitation. He waved his hand and said, “Alright. It is already quite late. You should tidy up your own rooms and rest for the night. From tomorrow on, you can all go and take a look around the Inner Academy as you please. I think that this place will not disappoint you.”

“Is there really no training curriculum or classes?” Hu Jia hurriedly asked when she heard this.

“The Inner Academy doesn’t need such a thing. As long as you have sufficient ‘Fire Energy,’ you are permitted to enter the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ Training in that place is more effective than any training curriculum. Oh, that’s right. I have nearly forgotten. Each week the academy will collectively organize students to enter the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ once. If you want to talk about training curriculum, that can be considered as such...”

Elder Su laughed softly and said, “Additionally, the Inner Academy also has a ‘Dou Technique House,’ ‘Qi Method Hall,’ and other such places. If you want to obtain any Dou Techniques or Qi Method, you can go over

there and take a look. Of course, this is on the precondition that you have sufficient 'Fire Energy' to exchange for them. Compared to the Outer Academy, there is actually much more freedom in the Inner Academy."

"If you feel that you don't have sufficient 'Fire Energy' and that your hands are itchy, you can go to the Fighting Arena to earn 'Fire Energy.' Of course, the precondition is that you must possess sufficient strength. Otherwise, you will lose until you have nothing left."

Xiao Yan and the three others nodded their heads to express that they understood.

"If you don't have any other questions, go and rest. If you have any problems, you can come and find me." Elder Su waved his hands at the four of them, turned around, and walked out. He finally disappeared from the sight of Xiao Yan's group.

As he watched Elder Su leave, Xiao Yan clapped his hands and smiled to Xun Er and the other two, "Let's tidy up the rooms. This place may perhaps be our long term home in the near future."

"Yes." Xun Er and the other two smiled and nodded. They immediately split up, each going to search for their own room.

The silver moon hung high in the sky as night fell. The faint moonlight scattered from the sky, covering the enormous basin within.

Xiao Yan was seated cross-legged on the bed within a quiet room. His hands had formed the training seal. Following his cyclic breathing, threads of energy, visible to the naked eye, began to swim out of the air. Finally, they moved along with the breathing and entered unceasingly into Xiao Yan's body.

Next to Xiao Yan, a seven colored small snake was floating mid air. Its small body was moving with a strange rhythm and as it moved, the space around it began to fluctuate. An energy that was over ten times stronger than Xiao Yan's own was that pushed into the small snake's body. What was strange was that despite the huge energy and the small body of the snake, there was no movement. It was as if a few stones had been thrown into a bottomless abyss; leaving no ripples.

The training continued for about an hour. Only then did the drifting energy gradually recede. Xiao Yan's eyelashes moved slightly. A moment later, he opened his eyes, and exhaled coarse air that had been restrained in his chest.

"I have finally recovered. The consumption from the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' is really too large... However, the nearly one week of fighting in the forest did have quite a lot of benefits for me." Xiao Yan softly muttered. At this moment, his originally pale face had once again recovered its sleek redness. His pair of pupils appeared to be covered by a layer of faint, warm jade, appearing extremely strange.

Not long after Xiao Yan's training ended, the 'Seven-Colored Heaven Swallowing Python' also finished one night of training. It extended its snake tongue and hissed at Xiao Yan. Seeing this, the latter helplessly shook his head. He could only take out a bottle of 'Amethyst Lion Birth Essence' and flicked a couple of drops into its mouth. After which it shook its tail in a carefree manner, and went back into Xiao Yan's sleeves.

"This gluttonous little fellow..." Xiao Yan's hand rubbed the 'Heaven Swallowing Python' that twined around his arm. He bitterly laughed. He was just about to speak when the dark black ring on his finger suddenly trembled. Yao Lao's old illusionary figure immediately began to slowly float out.

"Teacher? How is it? Did you search for the 'Fallen Heart Flame?'" Xiao Yan braced his spirit when he saw Yao Lao appear and hurriedly asked in a soft voice.

"This, I didn't..."

Yao Lao smiled. His gaze swept all around him. Seeing Xiao Yan's disappointed expression, he laughed softly, "However, it is not that I did not acquire anything. After you entered the Inner Academy, I faintly sensed a little unusual aura. However, this Inner Academy is the core of Jia Nan Academy with many strong people. Therefore, I also didn't really dare to probe too thoroughly."

"Unusual aura?" Xiao Yan was slightly startled. He said in surprise, "Is

this related to the ‘Heavenly Flame?’”

“That should be correct... within this Inner Academy, there might really be the thing that you need.” Yao Lao mused for a moment before nodding. He said, “According to my probing, the place that is releasing the unusual aura seems to be on the northern side of the Inner Academy. If you have time tomorrow, go and take a look around that side. We might be able to find some clues.”

Xiao Yan hurriedly nodded when he heard this. It was good as long as they had a clue. He was most afraid of ending up with not the slightest news related to the ‘Heavenly Flame’ after putting in all his effort to enter this Inner Academy with great difficulty.

“There are many things within this Inner Academy that you need to rely on yourself for. If I were to act, I’m afraid that others might discover...” Yao Lao sighed.

“Ah. Ke ke. Didn’t teacher say that I relied too heavily on you far too much in the past. The current environment now does not pose any harm to me.” Xiao Yan replied with a smile on his face.

“It is naturally good that you can think in this manner... You need not worry about that mysterious ‘Hall of Souls’ chasing you here, within the Inner Academy. Therefore, you can be at ease and raise your strength here.” Yao Lao nodded in a gratified manner as he spoke.

Xiao Yan’s heart sunk a little when the mysterious ‘Hall of Souls’ was mentioned. This strange faction was something that even a strong person like Yao Lao feared this much. It was really difficult to imagine just how frightening its strength actually was.

“Ah. Teacher, you can rest assured.”

Only after seeing Xiao Yan nod his head did Yao Lao’s body shake. It once again turned into a shadow that disappeared into the ring.

“Looks like I can only hurry up and look for the second type of ‘Heavenly Flame.’ After which, I should help teacher refine a body that can accommodate his spirit. Otherwise, that ‘Hall of Souls’ would ultimately

be a poisonous snake that is hidden within the darkness, making it very hard to defend.” Xiao Yan’s finger slowly knocked on the back of his hand as he eyed Yao Lao disappearing. A long while later, he exhaled a long breath and mused within his own heart.

Chapter 459: New Students Tribute Fee

When Xiao Yan walked out from his room the next morning, he saw two human figures flashing and interlocking with one another within the hall of their new pavilion home. Powerful Dou Qi swarmed out from within the bodies of the two of them, and rippled throughout the entire hall.

On a chair in one corner of the hall, Xun Er was smiling as she watched the two figures. When she heard the sound of footsteps, she suddenly turned around and eyed Xiao Yan, who was climbing down the stairs. She could not help but hurriedly move forward to greet him. In a gentle voice, she smiled and asked, "Xiao Yan ge-ge are you awake?"

"Yes." Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. He faced the two people in the hall and asked with a smile, "What are those two fellows doing?"

"Perhaps it's because of this 'Hunting Competition.' When they were training last night, Wu Hao and Hu Jia each advanced to a seven star Da Dou Shi one after the other. They wanted to spar when they woke up in the morning. Hence..." Xun Er covered her mouth and explained with a laugh.

"Oh? They have advanced?"

Xiao Yan lifted his eyebrows when he heard this. He immediately sighed and shook his head. These two fellows were worthy of being the top among Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy. Their talent far exceeded that of an ordinary person. If one were to just discuss training talent, they would even be on the same level as Xiao Yan.

"What about Xun Er? What is your level now?" Xiao Yan turned his head over, threw his gaze toward Xun Er as he questioned with a smile. This girl had demonstrated training talent that caused even him to be amazed at. When he had left Wu Tan City, Xun Er was merely a Dou Zhe. Now, after only over two years time, she was already at the Da Dou Shi level. This kind of speed was something that he would likely have difficulty catching up to if he did not have Yao Lao's help. Moreover, Xun Er was even younger than Xiao Yan.

“Me? I am also at the seven star Da Dou Shi level now. However, after this ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition,’ I have been feeling that I am close to advancing. I think that within three or four days, I should be able to successfully become an eight star Da Dou Shi.” Xun Er lifted the teacup beside her, sipped shallowly and smiled as she replied to Xiao Yan.

“Tsk tsk, one after another...”

Xiao Yan could not help but click his tongue. It appeared that all of the people in this small, four man group were not ordinary people. All of them had shocking talent and great potential. Moreover, Xiao Yan dared to say that all three of them had their own hidden abilities and trump cards. If they were to meet an extremely dangerous situation, the strength that would erupt from them shock people. He did not have any doubt when it came to this matter. After all, Hu Jia’s grandfather was the Outer Academy’s Deputy Headmaster with a strength that was near the peak of the Dou Huang class. Toward his only granddaughter, he would naturally not hold back when teaching her.

According to what Instructor Ruo Ling and the others had said, the person behind Wu Hao appeared to be the commander of the Law Enforcement Unit. This unit was basically the armed forces of the Jia Nan Academy. Usually, they focused on handling diabolical and fierce people who originated from the ‘Black Corner Region.’ By being able to become the commander of such a unit, it was likely that his strength was not much weaker than Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan.

There was even less need to talk about Xun Er. Even until now, Xiao Yan was still uncertain of the enormous faction behind her. Of course, from the somewhat fearsome tone of Yao Lao, he could vaguely sense the huge outline.

With the background of the three of them, Xiao Yan did not think that the trump cards that they possessed would be much weaker than his own. Since he could rely on the Secret Technique to defeat an elite Dou Ling, it was likely that they would also be able to do something similar, no?

“Bang, bang!”

Just as Xiao Yan was sighing endlessly over the strength of this small group of his, a hurried knocking sound suddenly sounded from the door in an untimely fashion.

Xiao Yan lifted his head uncertainly. His gaze swept toward the front door and Xun Er obediently stood up and swiftly walked over. Wu Hao and Hu Jia had ceased sparing when they heard the knock. They grabbed the towels beside them and wiped off their perspiration. After which, they walked over to Xiao Yan's side, lifted the teacups on the table, and swallowed the tea in one gulp.

"What happened?" Wu Hao asked vaguely after drinking.

"We will know once we take a look." Xiao Yan smiled, and lifted his head only to see Xun Er, who had opened the door and conversed with the person outside for awhile, swiftly walking back.

"Xun Er, what is it?" Hu Jia smiled and asked Xun Er a question as she tied a purple belt around her pretty waist, illustrating her already delicate and narrow waist, until it was even more alluring.

"There are dozens of new students outside saying that they want to meet Xiao Yan ge-ge." Xun Er knit her eyebrows slightly as she spoke.

"New students? Is there something wrong? Forget it, let them in." Xiao Yan was slightly startled before he immediately replied.

"Yes."

Xun Er nodded her head when she heard this. She beckoned with her hand to the area outside the door. Immediately, more than ten figures swarmed in and came over, surrounding Xiao Yan's group. For some unknown reason, their faces were all flushed red.

"Senior Xiao Yan. Being a fellow new student, you must definitely help us. The older students in this Inner Academy have really gone too far." It was a young man, whose face was somewhat flushed in agitation. Xiao Yan still remembered that this young man was one of the three people who was still standing after matching up against that single 'Black Demon Group' member in that match with the 'Black Demon Group' during the

‘Hunting Competition.’ If he recalled correctly, his name was Atai.

“What happened? Tell me clearly.” Xiao Yan frowned and said.

“Starting from this morning, some older student groups entered the new students’ area, shouting all the while. They wanted to collect what they called the New Student Tribute Fee, which is 2 days’ worth of ‘Fire Energy’ per person... We also know that as a newcomer, there is no need to act too sharply. It is alright if we just endured a little. Thus, we did not say anything and handed the ‘Fire Energy’ payment to them. In the end, it is unexpected that after we dispatched that group of people, even more older student groups came one after another, repeatedly barging into our new students’ area. They blocked the exit and are now asking us to pay again. Until now, three groups have already arrived. If this continues, the little ‘Fire Energy’ that us new students have obtained after fighting desperately with Senior will have been completely taken away!” The young man named Atai clenched his teeth and spoke resentfully.

“Aren’t these people going too overboard?” Hu Jia’s pretty face sunk slightly as her delicate hand heavily slammed down on the armrest of a chair.

Xiao Yan held a teacup with both hands. His eyes narrowed, but he did not open his mouth to say anything.

“Senior Xiao Yan, we have come to look for you, not because we want you to help exempt us from such harassment. We also understand that as new students of the Inner Academy, it is unavoidable to be bullied by the older students. I have also inquired with some friends. In previous years, the new students needed to pay a little of this so-called ‘New Student Tribute Fee,’ but it was not like what is happening to us now, where one group after another came. From what that friend of mine said, the reason for things being as such this year was because the performance of the new students in the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ caused some older students’ hearts to be in a bad mood. Thus, this kind of new situation has appeared.” Atai laughed bitterly and sighed.

“By saying all of these things, I am not blaming Senior Xiao Yan. You

have lead us to avoid being suppressed and bullied by the older students during the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition.' The reputation of Senior Xiao Yan is now the highest in the hearts of this year's new students. Hence, we can only request that you step forward now that we have met such a troublesome situation. Hopefully, this can allow us new students to conclude these layers upon layers of exploitation. Otherwise, if we do not even have enough training payment to enter the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower', how are we even going to discuss training in the Inner Academy then?" Atai stared intently at Xiao Yan as he continued, "If it is really not possible, we, new students, would rather hand over that so called 'New Students Tribute Fee' to Senior Xiao Yan instead of giving it to those bastards!"

"Give me the 'New Students Tribute Fee?' Won't that mix me into a class similar to those older students?" Xiao Yan smiled faintly. His finger gently tapped on his teacup, emitting a clear sound. After musing for a while, he smiled and said to Atai, "Since those older students are blocking the exit and collecting the tribute, I think that the few of us will not fall between the gaps. Why don't we do this? You will go and gather all the new students. We will hurry over immediately."

"In that case, Senior Xiao Yan, thank you very much. If you are in need of assistance in the future, this batch of new students will gladly listen to Senior Xiao Yan's orders!" Hearing this, Atai and the ten plus new students following him immediately rejoiced. They hurriedly bowed to Xiao Yan and quickly exited the hall of the pavilion house.

After seeing the new students leave, Xiao Yan turned his head, eyed Xun Er and the two others and asked, "How do you all see this matter?"

"You are the group leader, you make the decisions. However, we cannot just be some unresisting lamb that allows those people to bully, right?" Hu Jia frowned and said, "Moreover, if you do not bother to intervene in this situation, the reputation, that you have accumulated among these new students with great difficulty, might perhaps immediately collapse, and you would lose a great deal of people's support."

"Elder Su said yesterday that there are many scattered factions within

the Inner Academy. In the future, if we want to stay here for a long time, just the four of us may perhaps be a little weak. Now... is a good chance to draw people in. By relying on your reputation among the new students, as long as you dare to lead and take the risk of being beaten, there would perhaps be around eighty or ninety percent of the new students willing to follow you.” Xun Er voiced her thoughts.

“You want us to form our own faction?” Xiao Yan was a little astonished as he spoke.

“It would ultimately be better than joining someone else’s faction... it is just like you said earlier. It should also be difficult for us to escape paying that so called ‘Tribute Fee.’ Since this is the case, why don’t we gather everyone together. Although the strength of the new students is a little weak now, if we add up a few dozen of us, an ordinary small group would, at the very least, not dare to come and harass us again. No matter how one puts it, it would save us a lot of trouble.” Xun Er spread her hands and smiled as she explained.

“What Xun Er said could work. Rather than letting the new students assimilate into other factions, why don’t we try to gather them all together, and let them work for us.” Wu Hao nodded slightly and agreed.

Xiao Yan knit his brows tightly. His hands repeatedly rubbed the teacup. Seeing his deep in thought appearance, Xun Er and the other two did not dare to speak or interrupt him. They merely quietly waited for his decision.

“Hu...”

The silence continued for a couple of minutes before Xiao Yan finally let out a long sigh. He stood up and said in a deep voice, “Alright, I will do as you guys have suggested! Now is the best opportunity to rope in the new students. Once we lose this opportunity, it would be ten times more difficult if we wanted to rope them in in the future!”

“Go!”

Once he said these words, Xiao Yan waved his hand and strode out the front door. Xun Er and the other two exchanged glances with each other

before immediately smiling and following Xiao Yan with swift footsteps.

Chapter 460: Deterrence and Politeness

When they walked out of the pavilion house, there was a large road filled with greenery. On both sides of the large road were living quarters for the other new students. Of course, compared to the small pavilion house of Xiao Yan's group, theirs were much simpler and more crude. From the looks of it, such treatment was not something that everyone would receive.

There was not the slightest shadow of a new student on the road at this moment. It was likely that they had all gathered at the exit. Xiao Yan's four man group did not dare be slow. Their toes gently pressed on the ground and their bodies turned into wisps of light smoke as they swiftly rushed to the end of the large road.

Around four to five minutes later, the swiftly traveling four-man group slowed down. They lifted their heads and eyed the end of the road. They did indeed see a large group of people squeezing together there. Noisy abuses repeatedly rang out.

Xiao Yan waved his hands and lead the three others as they walked closer to the group of people. When the new students that had gathered around this place, saw Xiao Yan's four-man group, their faces could not help but become filled with great joy. They had just cheered when they were interrupted by Xiao Yan's hand gesture. Immediately, they hurriedly shut their mouths.

Xiao Yan's four-man group cupped their hands toward the new students and greeted them. Their gazes passed through the gaps in the crowd and eyed the exit.

Currently, the exit of the main road was being blocked by seven or eight older students who wore tower-shaped badges on their chests. There was another large group of older students watching the fun from behind them. Clearly, they were very happy to see the new students being suppressed. This was because they had all undergone this hurdle in the past.

On the opposite side of the eight older students was Atai, who had just

went to request Xiao Yan's help earlier. At this moment, he was leading the new students. His expression was green as he faced off against the older students.

"There is no need for any more nonsense. Little brat, the 'New Student Tribute Fee' is a custom of the Inner Academy for so many years. We were not harsh with you at all. Therefore, just obediently hand it over. Losing wealth will help you avert disaster. Don't tell me that you don't know this fact?" A young man, who was around twenty-five years old, smiled as he eyed the green-faced Atai and the others opposite him. He continued with, "Everyone hand over two days worth of 'Fire Energy' and I guarantee that you will all be safe and secure within the Inner Academy. This transaction is actually quite a bargain."

"Hmph. Don't think that we, new students, don't know the rules. It was indeed true that the new students should pay the 'Tribute Fee' to the older students. However, the Inner Academy also has an informal rule that the new students would at most give to two factions. After paying these two factions, the other factions would have to go after those two factions and talk with them if they still wanted to collect 'Fire Energy' off of us. It would no longer be our problem." Atai coldly snorted and angrily replied, "However, today, from this morning until now, no less than five factions have come. What 'Fire Energy' do we have to give you all?"

"Hee hee, that is under normal circumstances but aren't you all from this batch of new students very strong? In so many years, I have never heard of any new students defeating older student groups and stealing their 'Fire Energy' in the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition.' Since you are all so special and independent, the rules that apply to you all should naturally be special." That young man parted his mouth and spoke with a smile.

"Moreover, currently, you are not as poor as ordinary new students. The 'Fire Energy' on your bodies may be much richer than most older students."

"You are talking nonsense. We have already said that we will not give a single day more of 'Fire Energy.' No matter whether we still have 'Fire

Energy' in our hands or not, all of you can forget about it!" Atai's face was green as he scolded them furiously. Behind him, the faces of many students were also angry. This repeated exploitation had completely infuriated them.

"Hee, alright. very good... you are indeed a bunch of people with hard bones." Hearing this, that older student could not help but laugh coldly. He spoke in a sinister manner, "Little fellows, you should not forget that this is not the Outer Academy. Other than the Fighting Arena in the Inner Academy, it may be true that one cannot take people's life in the other parts of the Inner Academy. However, when people spar, one would usually suffer some physical pain, no?"

"If you really don't pay up today, I will not dare to guarantee that you will not receive some unjust treatment when you all leave this place. A young person should not be swayed by his emotions and act impulsively."

"You..." Seeing the dark smile of the young man, a fiery light once again rose within their hearts. Their eyes were spitting fire.

"There is no need to guarantee. The new students no longer need to pay you even half a day's worth of 'Fire Energy.' This senior, please return to where you came from." A faint, cold laughter suddenly sounded from within the group of new students.

"Who dares?"

The expression of that young man swiftly became dark and solemn. His gaze coldly swept over the new students and his fist twisted slightly. In a cold voice, he said, "This batch of new students is indeed just like what the others had said. Their arrogance is boundless. Looks like as a senior, it is my duty to teach you all what the Inner Academy is really about."

"Ke ke, just as well. In that case, I will experience Senior's teachings." A cold laughter sounded once again. Immediately, the new student group parted and formed a path. Four human figures slowly walked out.

"It's Senior Xiao Yan!"

Seeing the appearance of the four people, a cheer immediately sounded

from the new students around. After the success of the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition,' the reputation of Xiao Yan, within the hearts of the new students, was already quite high.

"Xiao Yan? He is the Xiao Yan that defeated Luo Hou?" Hearing the cheers from the surroundings, some of the older students, who were watching the fun from the main road, could not help but emit surprised gasps. Their gazes carried some bizarreness as they stared at the black-robed young man.

"You are Xiao Yan?"

Seeing that the emotions of the new students had suddenly soared, the expressions of those older students blocking the entrance also changed a little. Clearly, they were quite afraid of Xiao Yan's reputation. After all, Luo Hou could be considered among the top one hundred people within the entire Inner Academy. At the very least, Luo Hou had once squeezed his way into the 'Strong Ranking.' Although there was some luck involved in it and he only stayed within the ranking for three days, being able to even get ranked naturally represented his extraordinary strength. Yet, even this strong person was defeated by Xiao Yan's hands. Hence, some of the older students in the Inner Academy feared Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan glanced at the young man, whose expression was changing repeatedly. He crossed his arms in front of his chest as said with a smile, "I am Xiao Yan. May I know what advice Senior has?"

"Do you intend to be the bird that stands out? Although you defeated Luo Hou, you should know that there are many in this Inner Academy who are much stronger than Luo Hou!" That young man was unwilling to throw his face and withdraw in public. At that moment, he could only stiffen his neck and coldly snort.

"We, the new students, do not have any intention of appearing arrogant. In the 'Hunting Competition,' it was merely because the actions of some older students were too extreme... We understand in our hearts that being newcomers, we should hold back our vigor. This is the best method for new people to assimilate. Therefore, we are no exceptions. We are willing

to pay the 'Tribute Fee' that we should give according to customary rules. However, with regards to those other harsh rules, I, Xiao Yan, will clearly say this here. We will definitely not accept them. If you want to use force, the forty-six of us new students present can only go all out to take you on." Xiao Yan gaze was slightly cold as he looked all around him and spoke with a deep voice.

"Bang!"

As Xiao Yan's words filled the air, the expressions of the dozens of new students behind him immediately became excited. Their feet violently stomped against the ground and Dou Qi surged. In a moment, dozens of different Dou Qi forces agglomerated together. The pressure that formed caused the older students to hurriedly retreat a few paces.

"You... Xiao Yan. Don't think that you can be arrogant just because you have more people. We are people from 'Qingshan.' Offending us in the Inner Academy..." The face of that young man could not help but become ugly after being startled and forced back by the force of a group of mere new students. Immediately, he let out a furious warning. However, his warning had yet to be fully delivered when he heard the sound of rushing wind abruptly charging toward him. A black shadow immediately swept past his eyes and his shoulders suddenly sank. He was shocked to realize that an enormous black ruler was already place on his neck.

"I will say this once more. We, new students, are willing to pay those that we should pay. From now on, we will not pay even half a day's worth of 'Fire Energy' to those that we do not need to pay. I don't care which faction you belong to. If you continue speaking such nonsense here, don't blame me, Xiao Yan, for ignoring my manners..." Xiao Yan held the ruler with his left hand. His dark, black pupils stared intently at the young man, who felt the pressure from the heavy ruler until he was sinking. His voice was cold.

As he saw the coldness in Xiao Yan's eyes, the throat of the older student rolled slightly. A drop of cold sweat dripped down from the rest of older students foreheads. He could sense that there was a real, thick, cold killing intent contained in the voice of the young man who was much younger

than him.

“Chi...”

The heavy ruler moved slightly, carrying a rushing wind sound as it was placed back on Xiao Yan's back. Xiao Yan slowly stepped backward and finally pulled back such that he stood in front of Xun Er and the two others.

“Just you wait!”

The older student's face was alternating between green and white shades after seeing Xiao Yan step back. A long while later, he finally waved his sleeves in an anger caused by shame. He turned his body and left behind some vicious words before leading his people and fleeing from this place.

Seeing that Xiao Yan had actually frightened that group of older students away, all the new students could not help but once again emit cheers. The gazes they used to look upon Xiao Yan were incomparably hot. Clearly, Xiao Yan stepping forward to speak for them this time around had completely caused all these new students to approve of his position.

“All the Seniors. We, this batch of new students, do not have some special ability and don't want any special privileges. As for the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition,' I have already said earlier that it was merely because the actions of the older students were too extreme... Now that we have entered the Inner Academy, as newcomers, we have no intention of taking this chance to be arrogant. Everyone here is our Senior. We, the new students, will not pay those that we don't need to pay. Hence, everyone need not view us, this batch of new students, differently. Xiao Yan will thank all of you here.” Xiao Yan lifted his head to eye those older students, who were watching at the intersection. He cupped his hands and spoke in a clear, courteous voice.

Xiao Yan had just established his might but was now speaking in such a courteous manner. This action of Xiao Yan caused some of those older students to look at one another. A moment later, some of those with a more sensitive mind could not help but quietly nod their heads. This Xiao

Yan was quite the character. He knew his limits when he did things.

Behind Xiao Yan, Xun Er and the two others also nodded slightly. No matter how strong they were, it was definitely impossible for them to make enemies of all the older students in the Inner Academy. If Xiao Yan appeared even a little proud after establishing his might, these matters might be passed into the ears of quite a number of strong people within the Inner Academy. At this time, it was difficult to avoid having people come and make things difficult for them. This time around, only some weaker older students had come. The next time around may well be truly strong people.

They were able to defeat Luo Hou, but Luo Hou's strength was only average within the Inner Academy. Hence, they were currently unable to do things in such a high profile manner. The most important thing was to quickly gain a foothold in the Inner Academy and do their utmost to train in order to raise their overall strength. This was the long term solution!

Chapter 461: Pan's Gate

Xiao Yan sighed in relief as he watched those older students finally disperse. He turned around, eyed those repeatedly cheering new students and could not help but smile.

“Senior Xiao Yan, this time around it’s all thanks to you.” The young man called Atai smiled as he walked forward and voiced his thanks to Xiao Yan.

“All of us are new students. It is only naturally that we help each other out. It is just that I didn’t expect that merely successfully passing through the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ would actually cause us even more trouble.” Xiao Yan shook his head and said somewhat helplessly.

“Ah. That’s right. Such a thing has seldom occurred in past years. Most of the older students have suffered bad treatment back when they entered the Inner Academy. Now that they suddenly see that we, this batch of new students, actually swaggered through it, it is unavoidable that they would feel a little hatred in their hearts. I think that although we have relied on Senior Xiao Yan’s name to frighten off these fellows this time around, it is possible that there might be others who will come for us in the future.” Atai sighed.

Xiao Yan frowned slightly and softly muttered, “Looks like this is not a long term solution...”

As the distance between the two of them was close, Xiao Yan muttering naturally did not escape Atai’s ears. His eyes immediately brightened. After hesitating for a moment, he asked in a discrete manner, “Senior Xiao Yan, I wonder... are you planning to create a faction within the Inner Academy to protect us?”

“Oh?” Xiao Yan raised his brow as he closely stared at the dark skinned but highly keen youth.

“Ke ke, Senior Xiao Yan may perhaps know that the Inner Academy is scattered with various large and small factions. The number of factions is quite large. Moreover, the atmosphere of the Inner Academy does not

prohibit the action of forming cliques or gangs. Instead, they have an encouraging sort of stance..." Atai voiced his thoughts.

"Normally speaking, unless a person's strength is extremely great, one would usually have some difficulty avoiding trouble while trying to muddle along in the Inner Academy alone... let's not talk about the other matters for now. Instead we should focus on the matter regarding entering the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to train. This is the essential point for all Inner Academy students to swiftly raise their strength. Everyone pays great attention to this. Within that tower, every level is distributed by the Inner Academy into high, medium and low, three different grades of training areas. When training in the high grade training area, one's training speed and benefits will undoubtedly greatly surpass the other two."

"Originally, according to common sense, whoever is lucky enough to first enter the high grade area is whoever would be able to train there. Unfortunately... The Inner Academy does not prohibit private fights within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower'. Hence... normally speaking, even if you are lucky to occupy a high grade training area, if you do not have sufficient strength to hold onto it, you will still be ousted by others. Hence... if one wants to have the best training conditions within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' one must possess a great strength and group..." Atai's gaze also paused on Xiao Yan's face as he explained in a deep voice.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. His eyes flashed but no one knew what he was thinking.

"Senior Xiao Yan, your personal strength is strong. Adding Senior Hu Jia and the other two, you can be considered a group which isn't weak. However, after all... there are too few of you. It is said that two palms have difficulty fighting four hands. If other factions have ten to twenty people coming at once, Senior Xiao Yan and your group might well be a little powerless." Atai slowly said.

"You want me to rope in all the new students and create a new faction?" Xiao Yan looked at Atai in front of him and asked in a soft voice.

“With the reputation that senior Xiao Yan currently has in the hearts of the new students, it is completely possible to successfully accomplish this!” Atai nodded heavily and replied in a deep voice.

Xiao Yan interlaced his ten fingers but did not immediately reply.

“Senior Xiao Yan, if you have such an intention, you should quickly grasp this opportunity. This is because, usually speaking, there will be other factions roping the new students into their own camp each time they enter the Inner Academy. This moment is the time when Senior Xiao Yan’s reputation is at its peak. If you give up and do not use it, it is likely that all the new students will be roped in by the other factions by the time you want to do it. Moreover, if we, the new students, could have a faction that belongs to us, the benefits toward us are something that need not be said. Hence, as long as Senior Xiao Yan dares to lead us, I dare to say that there will be no one among the new students who will object...” Atai said seriously.

“You seem to be extremely familiar with the Inner Academy?” Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He immediately eyed Atai somewhat strangely. All these things that this person had said so far had exceeded the knowledge of an ordinary new student.

“Hee hee, I do know some people within in the Inner Academy. Therefore, I am quite clear about this information.” Atai laughed, “So what do you think? Senior Xiao Yan? As long as you agree, I will be responsible for talking to the new students. I guarantee that there won’t be the slightest problem.”

“Just call me Xiao Yan... do you know roughly how many students there are within this Inner Academy?” Xiao Yan smiled and lowered his head to think quietly for awhile before asking a question.

“There should be nearly a thousand... The exact numbers have not been calculated before.” Atai thought for a moment before replying.

“Nearly a thousand? So many? There are but only fifty new students who enter the Inner Academy each year. Moreover, these students would not stay here forever, right?” Xiao Yan said with astonishment.

“Ke ke, the Inner Academy is a five year program. The students can train here for five years. After five years, it is time for them to go their separate ways. Of course... if one has outstanding training talent, one can apply to delay their graduation by two years. These students who remain behind are all the top strong people within the Inner Academy and the top few existences in the ‘Strong Ranking.’ Although there are only fifty students who come in after participating in the Qualification Competition, this is not all of the Inner Academy. At times, if some Elders were to meet a disciple with outstanding training talent when they go out, these people can become Inner Academy students as long as they can pass through the harsh examinations of the Inner Academy. Additionally, there are those from the Alchemist Department, Law Enforcement Unit, and other special departments. They can enter the Inner Academy through other channels. Hence, after the accumulation these years, it is not impossible for there to be nearly one thousand students in the Inner Academy.” Atai smacked his lips as he replied.

“Oh...” Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He rubbed his hands together and said, “From the looks of it, our forty plus new students is not considered a very large size.”

“How can our faction be so large before it has even started? Didn’t those old factions also undergo recruitment over a long period of time in order to become larger?” Atai spread his hands and said, “Let’s use those fellows from earlier as an example. They belong to ‘Qingshan.’ That faction could barely be considered a middle level one within the Inner Academy. They seem to have over twenty people in total. However, their overall strength exceeds the strength of our new students by a lot. If we were to really fight, we won’t know who would be the winner, even if all of us were to fight.”

“However, if we, the new students were to really coagulate together, factions with strengths similar to ‘Qingshan’ would not dare to go too overboard. After all, if we were to fight, they would also suffer quite a lot.”

Xiao Yan’s pursed his lips slightly, having some difficulty making a decision. He was used to being alone. Now, he was asked to manage a faction. Although there were only tens of them, it was also quite

troublesome... However, if he did not round the new students up, it would be just as Atai had said. By just relying on the four of them, it would likely be quite troublesome within the Inner Academy. No matter how one put it, the more people there were, the greater their strength would be.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, there is some basis to what Atai has said. If you do not make a decision now, it is likely that these new students will be pulled away by other factions before long. At that time, it would be very difficult for us to come across such an opportunity.” Xun Er took a few steps forward, came to Xiao Yan’s side and spoke softly.

“If Xiao Yan ge-ge is afraid that it would be troublesome, you can hand everything to Hu Jia and I to manage. We do have some speciality in this.” Xun Er covered her mouth and laughed, seeming to clearly know where Xiao Yan’s troubles lay.

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly when he heard this.

“Senior Xiao Yan, as long as you have the courage and resolution to lead, we, this batch of new students, will all follow you! In any case, those older students treat us as an eyesore. If we have a choice, who would willingly endure this misery?” A clear voice suddenly rang out. Immediately, a large group of echoing voices followed closely. Xiao Yan was slightly stunned as he raised his head, only to realize that the new students had surrounded him at an unknown time. At this moment, these new students were looking at him with faces filled with anticipation, awaiting his decision.

Xiao Yan’s ten fingers were tightly linked together. Under the watch of numerous gazes filled with anticipation, Xiao Yan let out a deep breath a while later. He waved his hand, clenched his teeth and said fiercely, “Alright! Since everyone trusts me, I, Xiao Yan, will lead all of you to gain a foothold in this Inner Academy. For myself, for all of you, let us work together for once. Otherwise, it would not be really nice to muddle along in the Inner Academy where tigers and dragons hide!”

Upon hearing Xiao Yan’s words, these new students, with anticipation filled faces, began cheering in a somewhat excited manner. Having an organization would give people a greater sense of security.

When they saw that Xiao Yan finally nodded his head, Xun Er and the others behind him exchanged glances and also quietly sighed in relief.

“Since this is the case, Chief, after forming a faction, we should give a name to our new student faction right? Otherwise, how will we declare it to those outside?” Atai also placed the large burden on his heart down as he smiled and asked Xiao Yan. The way his form of address changed was extremely smooth. However, this form of address caused Xiao Yan to feel a little awkward.

“Name... Since our intention is to survive in this Inner Academy, our name should be ‘Pan’s Gate.’ Hopefully, our new student faction will be like a rock, staying solid and firm in front of this forest of strong people in the Inner Academy.” Xiao Yan was not much of an expert on naming things. At that moment, he thought for a while and could only randomly say this.

TL, Pan – rock, steady

“Pan’s Gate... this is also possible. The name is but something to address us by.” Atai repeated it over and over in his mouth but did not object. He turned his body to the surrounding new students as he smiled and said in a clear voice, “Everyone, from today on, this new student faction of ours will be collectively called ‘Pan’s Gate!’ Senior Xiao Yan will be our leader! In the future, we will listen to his orders! Those who dare to disobey us will be cast aside!”

“Alright! Pan’s Gate!”

“Those who disobey will be cast aside!”

Hearing the name that Atai shouted from his mouth, an excited flush swarmed up onto their faces as they roared out softly. Young people were ultimately filled with hot blood!

Seeing the high emotions of the new students, an unknown feeling suddenly rose within his heart. From today on, he would lead ‘Pan’s Gate’ to forge a foothold and place their roots in the Inner Academy with numerous strong people!

“Hee, alright. Let me, Xiao Yan, take a look at just how extraordinary this Inner Academy is!”

Chapter 462: The Mysterious Black Tower?

“Xiao Yan, this ‘Pan Gate’ has just been established and you have already run away. In the many years that I was part of the Law Enforcement Unit, this is the first time that I have seen such an irresponsible leader...” Wu Hao complained helplessly to Xiao Yan who was swiftly walking in front of him on this spacious road. After this fellow had confirmed the name of the faction earlier, he had thrown the matter of settling the new students to Xun Er and Hu Jia before finding an excuse to slip away.

“They will be able to get it done properly. I only created the effect of gathering people’s hearts. Now that I have already pulled people in, I can naturally rely on those two to settle the troublesome matters. It would not be too late for us to show ourselves and take responsibility if someone were to create trouble.” Xiao Yan slowed his footsteps and laughed toward Wu Hao. After which, he turned his head and eyed the spacious road around him. At this time, there would be some older students from the Inner Academy rushing past on the road. However, there were not many people who gave much attention to Xiao Yan and Wu Hao. Clearly, not all of the older students had heard the name of the leader of this batch of new students.

Wu Hao helplessly shook his head. He then lifted it, looked at the the road, which extended in all directions, and asked, “Where are you planning to go?”

“Let’s go to the north to take a look...” Xiao Yan’s finger slowly rubbed the black ring as he lifted his chin to the north. After listening to what Yao Lao had said last night, he might be able to obtain some clues about the ‘Heavenly Flame’ if he were to search in that general area. The current Xiao Yan felt impatient when it came to searching for the ‘Heavenly Flame’ in order to enable himself to swiftly raise his strength. Hence, he did not want to delay for even a moment.

“North?” Wu Hao was stunned momentarily before he nodded his head

indifferently. In any case, they had come out to familiarize themselves with the school grounds. It didn't matter where they went.

"Let's go." Xiao Yan waved his hand. His feet abruptly stomped on the ground. Following an energy explosion, his entire body emitted a 'xiu' sound as he shot away. The speed of his body caused some of the older students coming and going to display surprise in their eyes.

"This fellow..." Wu Hao shook his head. Some blood-colored Dou Qi suddenly surfaced on his legs. As the Dou Qi fluctuated slightly, Wu Hao's body also became slightly illusory. Immediately, his body quivered and actually bizarrely disappeared from that spot. When he next appeared, he was already ten meters away. In a few flashes, he swiftly gave chase after Xiao Yan.

From the Agility Dou Qi that both Xiao Yan and Wu Hao displayed, it was undoubtedly that the latter appeared a little more ethereal. If he were to fight with others, this kind of agility would cause his opponent to have a headache.

"What a strange Agility Dou Technique..." The older students coming and going watched a bloody shadow, which disappeared from their sight, and could not help but voice their praises.

The size of the Inner Academy was so large that it was a little beyond Xiao Yan's and Wu Hao's expectations. The two of them expended their energy and ran wildly for nearly half an hour. However, they still did not reach the boundaries of the Inner Academy. Along the way, they were frequently able to see some battle circles where people sparred and had heated fights. There were quite a number of people watching around them. Some people, who were more talkative, would shout out the openings that were exposed by the two fighters as they watched. In the end, it caused the two people fighting to feel more alarmed the more they fought. In the end, they could only withdraw their hands and pull back with faces filled with melancholy.

"Those who can enter the Inner Academy of the Jia Nan Academy are indeed not ordinary people. This kind of in depth sight is sufficient to

cause those Outer Academy students to be unable to match.” Xiao Yan sighed when he withdrew his gaze from a certain battle circle.

“Most of the students here have undergone various refining. If any random one of them were placed in an empire within the continent, it is likely that they would be treated as a genius. The eyesight of these people is not surprising.” Wu Hao smiled and continued, “However, the atmosphere here is indeed quite fierce. They would immediately start a fight on the spot to settle any disagreements.”

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. His gaze swept around and was a little stunned to discover that for some unknown reason, there was an increasing number of people clustering over on this road headed north. Each of them unleashed their speed to the maximum. Hence, Xiao Yan and Wu Hao only saw human figures repeatedly rushing past the trees by the sides of the road as well as the ‘hu hu’ rushing wind sound.

“It looks like they are all hurrying north? What exactly is over there?” Wu Hao had similarly realized the increase in the number of students as he asked in surprise.

“Hei, We will know once we go over and take a look.” Xiao Yan smiled. His feet stepped off the ground as his body once again shot out. Finally, Wu Hao followed closely, like the maggots in a bone.

The quick traveling this time around lasted for another twenty plus minutes before Xiao Yan’s and Wu Hao’s speed gradually slowed. A large black mass, consisting of many students who had come to a stop, appeared in front of them at this moment.

“Why are there so many people?” Xiao Yan could not help but be stunned as he watched this black mass of people that were like ants.

“I don’t know...” Wu Hao was also unfamiliar with this place. Hence, he could only helplessly shake his head.

Xiao Yan fondled his chin with his hand. He took one look at the surroundings before swiftly arriving under a huge tree. He spoke to Wu Hao, “Let’s go up and take a look...” Once he said this, Xiao Yan leaped onto a tree branch without waiting for Wu Hao’s reply. His body was like

an agile monkey as he climbed up the tree in an extremely agile manner. In merely dozens of seconds, his body appeared on top of a large tree with a single leap.

Xiao Yan watched the scene below from a high vantage point as he stood on the top of the tree. His gaze floated past the black mass of the human crowd and directly swept over to the front. Immediately, his face was startled. His mouth also slightly opened, "This is...?"

A depressed area appeared within Xiao Yan's sight. Within that depression was an extremely large black tower deeply buried underground, revealing only the tip of the tower and a dark entrance.

The tower was buried in the ground?

This kind of extremely strange scene caused the astonishment on Xiao Yan's face to become increasingly dense. It was a long while later before he gradually recovered and muttered, "Don't tell me that this is the so-called 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower?' It is really unexpected... is it actually buried underground. Can one go in and train in there?"

Xiao Yan's gaze swept in the details across the single layer of the tower that was above the ground. He suddenly knit his eyebrows as he discovered that the space surrounding the body of the tower appeared to be faintly twisted and had some wrinkles. He had seen this kind of defense at the Outer Academy's 'Book Collection Hall'...

"Good lord, they actually specially placed this level of defense..."

According to what Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan had explained last time, Xiao Yan clearly knew that in order to set up this kind of defense that twisted space, one would need to have at least the strength of a Dou Zun...

"Dou Zun..." Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and shook his head. A strong person of this class was really too frightening. They were actually able to use space, something which was ethereal and invisible, to do whatever they pleased. Just what kind of terrifying realm was Dou Sheng, or even Dou Di which was above both of them?

"Chi..."

Just as Xiao Yan was repeatedly marveling the frightening strength of an elite Dou Zun, a large rushing wind sound appeared not far behind him. He turned his head and was a little shocked to realize that dozens of human figures flashed over from far away. The speed of these people was extremely fast. In less than ten seconds, the human figures steadily and orderly appeared on the branches of a few large trees beside Xiao Yan.

“These people are quite strong...” Upon inspecting these human figures at close proximity, Xiao Yan realized that these dozens of human figures all wore a badge, similar to a leaf, on their chests. It appeared that these people all belonged to the same faction.

“Ah, there are indeed many factions within the Inner Academy. Our ‘Pan Gate’ has only just been created...” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and shook his head. His gaze stared at those human figures only to realize that they had already rushed down by themselves after observing the scene below. The large group of people dived down from high up in the air before they directly charged to the front of the large group of black mass in an extremely rude and unreasonable manner.

This action of forcefully cutting queue clearly caused everyone to be angry. However, when people saw the leaf-shaped badge on their chests, they could only angrily swallow the words that reached their mouths.

“I think that this faction should have quite a great amount of strength within the Inner Academy...” Xiao Yan watched everyone’s reaction with his eyes as he softly muttered. Immediately, he moved along the tree trunk and swiftly leaped down.

When his legs landed on the ground, Wu Hao, who had not stood beside him, hurriedly met up with him. He asked, “Have you checked it out clearly?”

“This place seems to be the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’” Xiao Yan patted his hands and immediately squeezed toward the crowd. He smiled and said, “Let’s go, let us see just what use this ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ has. It can actually allow people to train with such great speed.”

“This is the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower?’” Wu Hao’s expression was

slightly joyful when he heard this. He hurriedly followed Xiao Yan and did his best to squeeze into the human crowd. Clearly, he was also very interested in this thing.

When Xiao Yan and Wu Hao reached the limit of the human flow after some difficult squeezing, they could no longer squeeze forward. The reason was not that the people in front had been squeezed until it was packed. On the contrary, there was an extremely spacious empty ground in front of them. A couple of dozens of meters, on the opposite side of the empty ground, was that mysterious black tower deeply buried in the ground.

At this moment, the spacious ground was divided into a couple of areas in an extremely orderly manner. There were a large group of people seated with their eyes shut within each area. Xiao Yan's gaze swept over these human figures. He realized that the people he had seen on the treetops were among them.

"These people should belong to some of the stronger factions within the Inner Academy. They are rather overbearing. They need not to wait in line and can directly occupy the best positions. Tsk tsk, no wonder Atai said that in the Inner Academy, one must build or join some strong factions in order to obtain the best training conditions." Wu Hao said in a soft voice.

"It is indeed a little overbearing..." Xiao Yan nodded a little. He deeply observed the various factions, whose members were seated cross-legged with their eyes closed. He did not come into the limelight and walk into that circle. He understood that currently, 'Pan Gate' did not possess that kind of qualifications. Once he advanced to the 'Dou Ling' class, he might perhaps be able to stand among them. However, for now, it was better to keep a low profile.

"Dong!"

Just as Xiao Yan and Wu Hao were softly discussing, an ancient gong sounded mightily in this area. Following the sounding of the gong, the noisiness came to an abrupt halt.

"Open the tower!"

As the gong sounded, an old voice appeared to be transmitted out from within the tower.

Not long after the old voice sounded, one could see that the dark, black door, which was tightly shut, began to slowly creak open. A faint hot aura seeped out from it, causing the temperature of this area to be raised slightly.

Xiao Yan's eyes suddenly shrunk as he sensed the temperature difference. His hand had also tightened at this moment.

"Enter the tower!"

The old voice sounded once again. Immediately, all of the people in the empty ground with their eyes closed suddenly opened them. They abruptly stood up. One could only hear the sound of rushing wind as the numerous human figures shot explosively toward the tower entrance from all directions.

"Go, let's go in as well."

Xiao Yan restrained his heart, which had suddenly become agitated. He waved his hand at Wu Hao and led the way into the empty ground. After which, they swiftly walked toward the mysterious black tower buried deep underground.

As they narrowed the distance between them and the tower, Xiao Yan finally truly sensed the enormous size of this black tower. This was merely just a level that was exposed above the surface. Yet, it was actually equivalent to a two or three story building. The corner of an iceberg was like this. It was difficult to imagine just how majestic the body of the tower, that was hidden underground, was.

Xiao Yan's footsteps paused a couple of meters in front of the black tower. He gave way to others and stood off to the side, weighing this black tower, which appeared a little ancient, in great detail. He did not know what material was used to build the tower, but it faintly emitted a heaviness and... icy-coldness?

"What a strange place. The interior of the tower is clearly filled with a

fiery heat, but they used a material that contains coldness to build the body of the tower? This... how strange.” Xiao Yan shook his head slightly. He had some doubts. Completely opposite effects were coexisting in the same place. This kind of implementation usually only existed when suppressing something.

“Let’s go, Xiao Yan.” Wu Hao urged as he pulled Xiao Yan, whose eyes was staring intently at the black tower.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. He turned his head and eyed the black front door. For some unknown reason something within his body moved slightly.

As they moved closer and closer to the main entrance of the black tower, the pounding of Xiao Yan’s heart became increasingly intense. A moment later, as he stood in front of the main entrance, his palms were actually filled with perspiration.

Xiao Yan stood in front of the main door and inhaled a deep breath of air. He suppressed the emotions in his heart and clenched his teeth. His heart was unruly as he lifted his feet and immediately stepped heavily into the darkness behind the main entrance.

The light in front of him suddenly darkened. An instant later, Xiao Yan sensed that his feet were stepping on the surface of a tough rock. However, his heart did not have the time to relax after his feet stepped on firm ground when his expression suddenly changed drastically. A delicate and handsome face suddenly became as red as burning charcoal. This scene... was extremely strange!

Chapter 463: Training Accelerator

Just as Xiao Yan's feet landed inside the tower's entrance, his entire body suddenly solidified. His delicate and handsome face was like burning charcoal and waves of faint, white-colored fog, that carried a 'chi chi' sound of meat being grilled, emitted from within his body.

Beside Xiao Yan, Wu Hao, who had similarly entered the tower at the same time, had a face that was similarly flushed red at this moment. White-colored fog also began to be emitted from his body like a rut.

The two of them stood at the door of the tower without moving. Some of the older students, who were entering from behind, originally rebuked them. However, when they saw Xiao Yan's and Wu Hao's situation, they immediately stopped the scolding and laughingly said in a gloating manner, "Looks like these two should be new students who just entered the Inner Academy. They actually dared to have no defense when they entered the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' for the first time. Serves them right..."

"Quickly go and inform the Elder in the tower. If they don't have an Elder supporting them when they enter the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' for the first time, it is likely that they will be disintegrated from the inside out."

Of course, the current Xiao Yan and Wu Hao were naturally unable to hear the words of these older students. They were now feeling shocked and were busy because of the sudden strange situation that had appeared within their bodies.

"Dammit. What exactly is happening?"

Xiao Yan's mind carried some alarm as he eyed a cluster of some strange fire which had absurdly appeared within his body. His heart could not help but become a little flustered. This cluster of flame was so strange that it was a little beyond common sense. There was no other reason except that this cluster of flame was actually formless and invisible. If it were not because of the fact that Xiao Yan was well versed in controlling flames

and knew about fire, it was likely that he would not treat this cluster of somewhat twisted and invisible mysterious thing as a kind of flame.

This cluster of invisible fire seedling was not considered to be overly strong. However, the interior of one's body was ultimately the weakest point of a person's body. In here, even if one was a strong Dou Huang, one would not dare to randomly allow some unknown energy to charge in. As long as a tiny bit of injury occurred in here, the loss that resulted would be difficult to estimate. It might even be permanent.

Ever since this cluster of invisible flame seedling appeared, the high temperature emitted from it began to cause the veins, bones, muscles, and other various organs in his body to feel piercing pain. Xiao Yan, who frequently played with fire, knew that this was the omen of being incinerated by high temperatures. If he were to continue in this manner, it was likely that not long later, the Qi Paths and other vital parts within his body would lose function under this damn flame. Once his Qi Paths lost their circulatory function, to a practitioner, he would be reduced to a useless person!

"Calm down, calm down!"

Xiao Yan inhaled a deep breath within his heart. He did his best to suppress his somewhat flustered heart that was a result of this sudden situation. A moment later, his mind moved. One could see the green-colored flame was swiftly swarming out from the space of the small Acceptance Spirit in the middle of the vortex. Finally, following Xiao Yan's command, it swiftly passed through one vein after another as it came in all directions in an encirclement manner as it surrounded the invisible flame of unknown origins within it.

As the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' showed itself, the high temperature, that was seeping out from the invisible flame, was finally completely isolated. At this point, Xiao Yan signed in relief. Fortunately, he had the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' to protect his body.

"This damn thing. How did it enter my body?" Xiao Yan began to have doubts after the danger being removed. He did not touch anything after he

entered the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower'. Moreover, there was still Dou Qi that was continuously circulating within his Qi Paths to act as a defense. It was impossible for this wisp of flame to enter into his body without any noise...

However, seeing the manner in which this strange flame had appeared, it was as though the flame was already in his body rather than barging in from the outside.

"How could it already be present within my body? The 'Green Lotus Core Flame' within my body acts as protection. It should be impossible for ordinary flames to enter!" Xiao Yan shook his head and swiftly killed off the thought that flashed in his heart.

"Huh? Invisible flames?" Just as Xiao Yan was puzzled despite much pondering, an old surprised voice was suddenly emitted from within his heart.

"Teacher?" Xiao Yan was immediately filled with great joy when he heard this voice.

"Invisible and colorless, borrowing the heart to appear, no traces found. This, this... this?" Yao Lao muttered to himself. A moment later a wild joy surfaced in his shocked voice.

"This is the Fallen Heart Flame?"

"Fallen Heart Flame?" Xiao Yan's mind suddenly trembled. At this instant, he seemed to have an excitement that caused him to be unable to control his emotions. The green-colored flame, which was wrapping around the invisible flame also soared intensely and even nearly caused it to disappear.

"Don't get so excited. Don't get so excited... huh?"

Yao Lao hurriedly said in a pacifying manner as he sensed Xiao Yan's agitated heart. He waited until he saw that the green-colored flame had gradually calmed down before he once again placed his attention on that cluster of invisible flame. A moment later, he suddenly emitted a doubtful 'huh' sound.

“What is it? Teacher?” Xiao Yan’s mind was staring intently at the invisible flame. He hurriedly asked when he heard Yao Lao’s surprised ‘huh’ sound.

“That’s not right...” Yao Lao doubtfully muttered, “This kind of form is indeed something displayed by the ‘Fallen Heart Flame,’ but it should not be so weak... yes, yes... this wisp of flame... does not seem to be from the original body of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame.’ Instead, it is a split body that was shot into the heart because of one being close to the actual body.”

“What do you mean?” Xiao Yan was at a greater loss when he heard Yao Lao’s words.

“This wisp of invisible flame seedling is not the true ‘Fallen Heart Flame,’ but merely a split body flame that was shot into your heart by the ‘Fallen Heart Flame.’ It would not be possible to achieve the effect of evolving the ‘Flame Mantra’ by swallowing this split body.” Yao Lao said in a deep voice.

Hearing this, Xiao Yan started to understand a little and was immediately very disappointed.

“What is there to be disappointed about? Since the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ is able to throw a split body flame into your heart, it means that its distance isn’t very far away... Moreover, I can also clearly tell you now that the ‘Fallen Heart Flame,’ which you are pursuing should be within this ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower!’ It is really unexpected that the Jia Nan Academy has actually hidden the ‘Heavenly Flame’ in such a place. No wonder it was so difficult to find.” Yao Lao laughed out loud. There was a joy that was difficult to hide within his laughter.

“The ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ is within this tower?” When he heard these words, Xiao Yan, who was a little disappointed moments before, once again became alert.

“This is the only way one can explain why the students of the Inner Academy would be able to train at such rapid speed within this tower.” Yao Lao smiled as he explained.

“This is also related to the ‘Fallen Heart Flame?” Xiao Yan asked in a

startled manner.

“It is naturally related... you, remove the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame.’ Circulate your Dou Qi and pass it through that wisp of invisible flame. Try and see what reaction there will be.” Yao Lao instructed.

Xiao Yan hesitated a little when he heard this. He immediately clenched his teeth and moved his mind. That green-colored flame, which was heavily covering that invisible flame seedling, made a ‘whoosh’ sound as it swiftly withdrew back into the ‘Acceptance Spirit.’

As the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ left, the high temperature once again spread out from the invisible flame seedling causing a faint piercing pain to be emitted from his Qi Paths and bones.

Xiao Yan forcefully endured the piercing pain as his mind moved a little. The thumb-sized rhombus shaped Dou Crystal within the vortex trembled slightly. Waves of green-colored Dou Qi swarmed out. Finally, under his control, it passed through a few veins and came to the place where the invisible flame was.

“Pass through it.”

Xiao Yan fiercely gave the order. One could see Dou Qi being abruptly spewed out and immediately rushed through that wisp of invisible flame under the focus of Xiao Yan’s mind.

The size of the invisible flame was extremely small. Hence, it did not even take one second for the green-colored Dou Qi charging into the flame to pass through it and come out from the other side.

“This...”

Xiao Yan’s mind tightly controlled that green-colored Dou Qi that passed through the invisible flame. He was stunned to realize that the originally strong Dou Qi had actually shrunk to nearly half its size after passing through the interior of the invisible flame!

While it may have shrunk to half its size, the green-colored Dou Qi, which had become much smaller, gave Xiao Yan a somewhat condensed and real feeling. This kind of feeling was as though the invisible flame had

twisted the somewhat scattered Dou Qi tightly together after the Dou Qi passed through it. With this, the energy that the Dou Qi, whose size had become smaller, could emit was definitely even greater than that turbulent Dou Qi from earlier!

Xiao Yan could not help but rejoice as he clearly sensed this kind of change within his Dou Qi. He hurriedly controlled his Dou Qi as it continuously passed through that wisp of invisible flame. However, just as the fifth strand of Dou Qi passed through it, the wisp of invisible flame began to quiver a little. Quickly following this, the flame became even more illusionary. Its temperature became increasingly lower. A moment later, it finally completely disappeared silently, in a manner similar to when it appeared.

“It disappeared?”

Xiao Yan could not help but feel stunned as the Dou Qi passed through empty space. He could sense that the hot feeling in his body had already begun to swiftly become faint.

“This is a cluster of extremely weak split body that was thrown into you. The purification energy that it created is very small. Hence, it can only support you purifying Dou Qi.” Yao Lao smiled as he replied, removing the doubt that Xiao Yan had.

Xiao Yan finally came to a sudden understanding as he heard this. He shook his head somewhat pitifully. His mind moved and he once again poured the few strands of Dou Qi, which had been purified, into the Dou Crystal within the vortex.

As his mind looked at the rhombus shaped Dou Crystal, Xiao Yan realized that after the bit of purified Dou Qi was poured into the Dou Crystal, the thumb-sized Dou Crystal appeared to have become slightly larger...

“This ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ actually has such a mysterious effect. Just a mere cluster of weak split body flame that was thrown out was able to slightly enhance my Dou Qi. If I can swallow the original body then...” Xiao Yan swallowed a mouthful of saliva when he thought of this. His

heart could not resist leaping intensely. This 'Fallen Heart Flame' was an accelerator that could increase the speed of one's training. The training speed of whoever was able to obtain it would likely enter a kind of extremely frightening stage!

"Why? Little fellow, are you interested?" Yao Lao teasing voice sounded.

Xiao Yan smiled and did not even hide the slightest bit of yearning in his heart.

"Teacher, the benefits that 'Fallen Heart Flame' can bring me might well be even greater than the 'Green Lotus Core Flame.' Hence... no matter what happens, I must definitely obtain it!"

Chapter 464: Shock

In the ancient tower, where the light was mild, a group of people had gathered around Xiao Yan and Wu Hao, whose eyes were tightly shut. Among them, they emitted soft laughter and had numerous private conversations.

“Make way, make way. Elder Liu is coming through.” A cry suddenly sounded from outside the crowd. Immediately, the crowd hurriedly split and formed a small path. Within this tower the position of an Elder was the greatest. Whoever dared to offend them would not come to a good end. By just randomly borrowing some of the power of the position to obstruct you, he could cause you to have no tears left to cry, even if you wanted to.

As the human crowd parted, an old man in simple and rough clothes slowly walked in. That smiling gaze of his swept across Xiao Yan's and Wu Hao's stiffened and unmoving bodies. He laughed and said, “There are really two little fellows who didn't know the might of the heavens and the earth (overestimate their abilities). They actually did not even bother to first report their initial attempt at entering the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ This hardship is something that they will suffer unduly.”

“Hee hee, there are always reckless new students every year who impatiently enter the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ They deserve to suffer this hardship...” A gloating laughter erupted from the human crowd. Although the training speed within the tower was rather fast, it was, after all, still a little boring. These older students were naturally happy to see the situation in front of them, new students entering and providing them some entertainment.

“The new students have just entered the Inner Academy. It is only natural that they were unaware of the rules here. What is there to laugh about?”

A faint, clear voice suddenly rang out. Everyone's gaze immediately followed the voice and took a look, only to see a young lady wearing a

silver-colored dress. The young lady was tall. Her face may have appeared skinny, but it was that of a rare beauty. Her skin was white as snow and her eyebrows were like a painting. The thing that caused people the greatest surprise was that this lady's long hair, which gathered at her waist, was actually a rare silver color. The silver-colored hair matched her silver-colored dress, causing her entire body to release a faint, cold disposition that repelled people such that they were thousands of kilometers away from her. It caused others to have a feeling of being able to see from afar, but unable to touch.

Everyone's gazes swept across this silver dressed woman while maintaining their silence. Their eyes initially flashed with adoration that a man would have for a woman. However, there was also fear mixed in with that adoration.

After this silver-dressed lady opened her mouth, the gloating laughter nearly disappeared immediately. From this, it could be seen that this lady should belong to a powerful faction. Otherwise, in this place where strength was honored, just her pretty appearance was insufficient to cause people around to be afraid.

"Ke ke, it is actually Yue girl. This old me actually did not see you earlier. This is a group of people who are so free that they are in need of a beating. What is there to talk to them about?" That Elder Liu also turned his gaze toward the silver-dressed lady when he heard the voice. He was slightly startled before he immediately laughed.

"Elder Liu."

That silver-dressed lady did not maintain her cold indifferentness when faced with Elder Liu. A faint epiphyllum-like smile appeared on her face, causing the surrounding students to be a little absent-minded when they saw this smile.

"Yue girl, which level do you intend to enter during this visit?" Elder Liu glanced at the stiffened bodies of Xiao Yan and Wu Hao before he immediately smiled and asked the silver-dressed lady. His attitude was clearly much friendlier than when treating other students.

“The sixth level.” The lady in the silver dress hesitated a little before replying.

“The sixth level? That is a level that one must have the strength of a six star Dou Ling before entering. Don’t tell me that Senior Han Yue has already reached such a level?” The lady’s words immediately caused waves of surprised wows to be emitted from the surrounding crowd.

“Uh?” That Elder Liu was also somewhat surprised at the reply of the silver-dressed lady. His eyes, which had a hidden glint, slowly swept over the latter’s body. A moment later, he sighed, “Looks like within a few years, you, girl, will have the qualification to run for the rank of an Elder in the Inner Academy. This kind of training talent and speed really cause people to be amazed.”

“It is all thanks to the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ If I were to train by myself, it is likely that I would, at the very most, have just entered the Dou Ling class.” The silver-dressed lady shook her head. She immediately turned her gaze toward Xiao Yan and Wu Hao in the crowd. She parted her red lips slightly, “Elder Liu, why don’t you first remove these people from being grilled by the Heart Flame. Otherwise, there may be quite a lot of damage to their bodies if you’re too late.”

Elder Liu shook his head when he heard this. He smiled and said, “Let’s wait awhile. Girl, how long did you endure being grilled by the Heart Flame when you first entered the ‘Blazing Flame Qi Refining Tower’ back then?”

Han Yue’s eyebrows were knit slightly. She mused for a moment before saying, “Seventeen minutes. Moreover, that was because there was someone who warned me beforehand when I was entering the tower.”

“When one first enters the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,’ it is actually possible to judge one’s potential. Since all the new students don’t know how to cause the Heart Flame to disappear when they are first burned by it, therefore, those who can endure longer meant that their resistance to the Heart Flame is stronger. This is a great benefit toward them when they enter and train within the tower in the future. Of course, nothing is

absolute. This cannot be considered to be absolutely accurate. However, it can be considered a vague test...”

Elder Liu smiled and replied, “Currently these two people appeared to have endured for eight minutes already, right? Ah. This can already be considered not bad.”

“Elder Su wants to test their limits.”

“Ah, let’s try... if I guess correctly, this black-robed young man should be that Xiao Yan, the little fellow who led this year’s new students in this ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ and defeated all the older students, including both ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ groups. Recently, he is also frequently mentioned among us Elders.” Elder Liu glanced at the enormous Heavy Xuan Ruler behind Xiao Yan’s back and smiled as he spoke.

“He is that Xiao Yan?” Hearing Elder Liu’s words, not only the surrounding older students emitted numerous exclamations, but a surprise also flashed across the pupils of the cold and indifferent Han Yue.

Elder Liu nodded with a smile. His gaze paused on Xiao Yan and Wu Hao. Both of his hands were inserted in his sleeves as he waited for the arrival of their limit.

“Yue girl, if you have something to do, then please descend the tower. It is alright with just me here.” As Elder Liu waited, he was afraid of delaying Han Yue’s training time. Thus, he smiled and encouraged her to go.

“It’s fine. I also want to see just how long this new student, who has quite a great reputation even before he entered the Inner Academy, can endure.” Han Yue shook her head slightly. A pair of cool eyes swept over Xiao Yan and Wu Hao. During these few days, she had also heard quite a lot of news regarding this batch of new students. They were able to defeat all the older students group in the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ while something like this never seemed to have appeared during these recent years. Hence, she had some interest in the leader of the new students, whom she had heard of but never met.

Of course, she was not the only one who had such interests. After

hearing Elder Liu revealing Xiao Yan's identity, the surrounding older students, who originally wanted to leave, similarly paused their footsteps. Each of them threw gazes, which contained various emotions, toward the two people present. They also wanted to see whether these fellows the strength they were rumored to have.

Due to some people spreading Xiao Yan's identity, there were older students who repeatedly came over during the waiting time. Hence, the circle grew increasingly larger. If it were not for the space within this tower being extremely spacious, it was likely that congestion would really be formed.

As time slowly flowed by, the shock in the eyes of these observers around also grew increasingly rich. This was because until this moment, both of them had actually endured for fourteen minutes. Moreover, their faces looked like burning charcoal but they did not appear to have reached their limit.

"Not bad indeed..." Elder Liu pulled at his beard and nodded with a smile. His eyes also contained some admiration.

Time continued to flow. However, at the sixteen minute mark, Wu Hao's body suddenly trembled slightly. Seeing this scene, the surrounding students knew clearly that it was likely that Wu Hao had reached his limit.

Seeing his reaction, Elder Liu extended his eagle-claw like, shriveled right hand. He aimed at Wu Hao's body, which had just begun to tremble, across the empty air. On the tip of his finger was a wisp of creamy white flames which slowly surfaced. The flames agglomerated at the tip of his finger to finally form a repeatedly rotating spinning fire.

Elder Liu's finger gently flicked the spinning fire. He saw the spinning fire swiftly leave his hand and suspended a foot away from Wu Hao's heart.

"Come out!"

Elder Liu's palm rotated slightly as he let out a soft cry. One could only see the cream-colored flame swiftly spinning and waves of suction force spread out. Finally, under the pulling force of this flame, a wisp of

somewhat twisted invisible flames were forcefully pulled from Wu Hao's heart. Finally, it was sucked into the spinning flame and forcefully crushed into nothingness.

As that wisp of invisible flame left his body, Wu Hao's trembling body immediately stilled. His feet became weak, and his butt sank to the ground. The burning charcoal expression also swiftly disappeared. He was panting coarsely, like a wild bull, emitting a 'hu hu' sound. At this moment, his body and spirit were in an extremely exhausted condition and he did not have the slightest mood to look at the crowd around him.

"Ke ke, sixteen minutes. Moreover this is after being eroded by the Heart Flame without any precautions. This result is not bad." Elder Liu smiled and praised as he eyed Wu Hao, who was seated on the ground, "This batch of new students seems to really be a little stronger than previous batches."

Han Yue who stood nearby also nodded. The endurance of this new student for the Heart Flame might have exceeded hers by one head. After all, although she had endured for seventeen minutes, there was someone who had told her what she should do when she first entered the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.' This was why she could endure for so long. Hence, she could have been considered to have cheated.

"That Xiao Yan... is actually able to continue enduring? This kind of fire resistance could even be comparable to that fellow..." Han Yue's pupils once again shifted toward Xiao Yan, whose eyes were still shut, as she muttered in a soft shocked manner.

"No wonder he was able to lead the new students to defeat the older student groups. This little fellow does indeed have some ability."

Elder Su smiled as he eyed Xiao Yan, who was still enduring without displaying any signs of having reached his limit. His hands were once again inserted into his sleeves as he said, "Good. Today, the old me wants to see just how long you can actually endure."

However, these words of Elder Liu had just sounded when everyone saw Xiao Yan's body suddenly tremble. Only then did they sigh in relief within

their hearts. Fortunately, this fellow did not do anything as shockingly similar as when he led the new students to defeat the older students. Otherwise, it would be too much of a blow to those who had endured for less than ten minutes back then.

“Ugh...”

Elder Liu was startled when he saw this. He immediately shook his head in disappointment as he laughed bitterly, “My expectations were indeed a little too high...”

“Elder Liu, it has been nearly eighteen minutes. This kind of resistance toward the Heart Flame is already considered great. One can hardly find anyone like this within the Inner Academy.” Seeing Elder Liu’s eyes, Han Yue could not help but speak in a helpless manner. Did the words he say not cause the other students to feel ashamed in their hearts?

“Hee hee, it is indeed very good...” Elder Liu laughed in an embarrassed manner. He waved his hand and a cream white-colored spinning fire surfaced. He flicked his finger and the spinning fire once again stopped in front of Xiao Yan’s heart.

The faint, cream white fire shone on Xiao Yan’s ember red face until he appeared a little strange.

“Come out!”

Another soft cry sounded. The spinning fire suddenly spun wildly. However, at this moment, something that caused people to be stunned appeared extremely abruptly!

As the spinning fire spun, the invisible flames, similar to what everyone expected to see did not appear. Instead, after being dull for an instant, a large cluster of green-colored flames suddenly came surging out of Xiao Yan’s body without any forewarning. Finally, it formed a green-colored wave. In one gulp, it swallowed the cream white-colored flames belonging to Elder Liu.

Not only did the white-colored flame fail to successfully forcefully crush the Green Flame like it did earlier, but was instead swallowed without

being able to resist. This strange scene caused the surrounding students to be stunned.

After the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' swallowed the cream-colored flame, it did not immediately disappear. When no one controlled it, it appeared to have the function to automatically protect its owner. Hence, after it swallowed the cream-colored flame, which posed as a threat toward Xiao Yan, it moved in the direction of the attacking breath, and directly swept toward Elder Liu. The energy, which instantly erupted not only caused the surrounding students to become pale from the shock, but also caused Elder Liu's face to move a little.

"Move aside!"

The green-colored flame came sweeping over. When Elder Liu felt its indiscriminate attack, he hurriedly cried out loudly.

Hearing Elder Liu's cry, the surrounding students hurriedly pulled back. In an instant, the inner region of the tower became chaotic. One by one, numerous human figures hurriedly pulled back. They were afraid that the green-colored flame of unknown source would sweep them up.

Elder Liu's face became solemn when he saw the green-colored flame sweeping toward him. He waved both his hands and a cream-colored flame was spat out from his hand. Finally, it swiftly formed a fire barrier. He flung his hand and covered Xiao Yan and the green-colored flame, which had come sweeping over, within it.

The green-colored flame still came chasing over endlessly. Finally, under everyone's gaze, it collided with that cream-colored flame barrier.

"Bang!"

The moment they came into contact, a wild, violent energy wave surged out, shaking the fire barrier until it trembled swiftly. The enormous, explosive sound carried a turbulent heat wave as it shook the entire 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' until it began to quiver a little!

Before Han Yue's body pulled back, Dou Qi had swiftly agglomerated into an energy barrier of light on her body. Ripples were repeatedly

formed on the energy barrier when she received the residual wave of the energy attack. It was fortunate that it did not cause her body any harm...

Han Yue's body swiftly pulled back dozens of steps. Only when she heard the loud sound gradually fading did she hurriedly throw her gaze over to where the explosion occurred. She was slightly startled after seeing that clear scene. She immediately opened her mouth slightly. Her heart was filled with astonishment.

Chapter 465: Meeting For The First Time

One could only see a faint, white fog shrouding the spacious interior of the ancient tower. At the edge of the white fog stood the figure of an old man who was breathing quite heavily.

At this moment, Elder Liu's face was swiftly changing between different colors. At times, he was shocked, at times he was alarmed, appearing extremely wonderful to look at. More than half of the robe he was wearing had also been incinerated. The smell of burned skin came from his hair. From his overall appearance, this Elder, who possessed quite a high position in the Inner Academy, was currently reduced to a miserable state.

At this moment, the other older students, who had moved aside to dodge the fire within the hall, finally recovered from their earlier panic. However, by the time they recovered and threw their gazes toward the area where the explosion had erupted from, they coincidentally saw the miserable looking Elder Liu. Immediately, their hearts, which had just recovered, were once again reclaimed by a dullness.

There was an extremely strict requirement on one's strength to be able to become a tower guardian Elder in the Inner Academy. Hence, all the the Elders within the tower were, without exception, people with extremely great strength.

Although there was some shocking and exciting geniuses in the Inner Academy who were able to stand shoulder to shoulder with some Elders after undergoing tough training, these people were definitely an extremely rare existence. Moreover, each and every one of them had reached such achievement after training in the Inner Academy for four to five years. However, at this moment, Elder Liu had ended up in such a miserable state at the hands of a new student, who had just entered the Inner Academy less than three days ago. This scene was basically more shocking and difficult to believe compared to Xiao Yan leading the new students to rob the older students.

The shock on Han Yue's face continued for a minute before it was finally

gradually withdrawn. Her pupils swept toward the place shrouded by white fog. There was an additional bizarreness in her originally cold and indifferent gaze. This new student was indeed very interesting.

“Cough...”

The silence in the ancient tower was suddenly broken by a coughing sound. Elder Liu’s gaze stared intently at the cluster of permeating white fog. He immediately lowered his head and dusted off his clothes, which were burned until they were in tatters and smiled as he said, “What a great Xiao Yan. No wonder the geezers were also so secretive when they mentioned you. It is actually because of that. You are really a fellow blessed by the heavens. There is not a single Elder in this tower who would not want to obtain this thing...”

It was natural that the older students in the tower would not understand Elder Liu’s words. However, they were able to grasp something. This Xiao Yan seemed to have something mysterious that even the Elders desired to have.

Elder Liu waved his sleeves gently. He had just scattered the white-colored fog that spread in front of him when two soft footsteps were transmitted out from within the fog. This caused him to stop his hand movement and stare intently at the fog.

The sound of footsteps reverberated within the ancient tower. Everyone scrambled to turn their gazes toward the fog covered area, where the sound of footsteps originated. No matter how one put it, the powerful force that Xiao Yan had displayed earlier was sufficient to cause them to forget his identity as a new student. They did not know that this strength was not controlled by Xiao Yan and it was instead energy erupting from the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ in an act to protect its owner. If they were to let Xiao Yan control the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ by himself, and once again unleash a strength that could force Elder Liu into this manner, the chances of him failing would be more than ninety-five percent.

As the sound of footsteps within the white fog become increasingly audible, a vague human figure slowly surfaced. Finally, the figure stepped

out of the white fog and appeared under everyone's gazes.

A young man in black robes was carrying a huge black ruler that was as tall as him. His left hand was carrying Wu Hao, who appeared to have already fainted. He frowned slightly as his gaze slowly swept over the surrounding crowd. With the exception of a few who were not weak, those older students, whose gazes collided with his, mostly became evasive due to the shock and awe they felt from the earlier explosion.

"Tsk tsk, to actually be able to rely on your own strength to wake up from the first grilling of the Heart Flame. Xiao Yan, you are the first person in many years to do so." Seeing Xiao Yan, who had already returned to his normal condition, Elder Liu was startled and immediately sighed.

"And you are?" Xiao Yan opened his mouth and asked somewhat uncertainly as he eyed the old man, who appeared in an extremely miserable state in front of him.

"Ke ke, I am the Elder for the first level of the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.' You can directly call me Elder Liu." Elder Liu laughed. The kind of stern berating that he used on the other older students was actually completely absent from his words. Just this treatment which Xiao Yan had received caused the surrounding students to mutter to themselves. Within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' and even the entire Inner Academy, the position of an Elder was extremely high. In this place, no student would dare to go against what an Elder said. Of course, this was with the exception of some outstanding people. This was because it was very possible for these outstanding people to take on the position of Elder, and become the same level as them. Within the Inner Academy, even the Elders also had to rope in strong people into their camps in consideration of their future.

After all, the Elders in the Inner Academy were not completely of the same faction. In any place, fighting was unavoidable. Perhaps it was because of power, perhaps it was because of profits or perhaps it was because of other things...

"Oh, Elder Liu, what happened?" Xiao Yan nodded his head as he came

to a sudden understanding. He eyed Elder Liu's appearance, and could not help but feel a little strange as he asked.

"Uh... nothing. An accident happened while carelessly controlling a flame." Elder Liu's eyebrows could not help but twitch a couple of times when he was asked this question by the instigator. Immediately, he laughed dryly and shook his head. He did not suspect that Xiao Yan was pretending to be stupid. The terrifying flame which had erupted from Xiao Yan earlier may have been extremely terrifying, but in the eyes of Elder Liu, who had played with fire for his entire life, he understood that it was merely an autonomous counter attack of 'that thing.' It was not really Xiao Yan's fault.

"Then this friend of mine?" Xiao Yan pointed at Wu Hao, whom he was carrying. At this moment, the latter was in an unconscious state.

"He's fine. It is just that he is a little exhausted because he was grilled by the Heart Flame. He will be fine after resting for a night." Elder Liu smiled and explained.

"Grilled by the Heart Flame?" The foreign words caused Xiao Yan to knit his eyebrows together once again.

"Ke ke, you are new to the Inner Academy. Hence you don't know some of the rules of the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.' If you have the time, would you like me to tell you about them?" Elder Liu smiled and asked.

"In that case... Elder Liu, thank you very much." Xiao Yan hesitated a little when he heard this, but agreed nonetheless. Being a newcomer, he should indeed gain some understanding about the most mysterious place within the Inner Academy. This would be in order to facilitate those new students from 'Pan Gate' to get in touch with opportunities as soon as possible, swiftly raise their overall strength and enabling them to have sufficient qualifications to survive in the Inner Academy, where the strong gathered.

"It's fine. This is also where my duty lies." Elder Liu waved his hands. His gaze turned toward the students observing from around him and his smiling face could not help but sink. He cried out, "Why are all of you still

around here? Are you not going to go train as soon as possible? If you feel that you have sufficient training time, I can help all of you shift from your position.”

Hearing Elder Liu’s cry, the surrounding students hurriedly shook their heads. After which, they swiftly rushed toward various spots within the ancient tower. They were afraid that if they were late, they might really end up having their position, which they had obtained with difficulty, swapped away by the former.

Seeing these older students, who acted proudly in front of the new students, being as obedient as lambs in Elder Liu’s hands, Xiao Yan could not help but feel that it was a little funny. However, on top of him feeling that it was funny, the weight of this Elder Liu in his heart had increased a lot. If it was not because he held actual authority within the Inner Academy, those arrogant older students would definitely not be so tame.

“Ke ke, these bastards are all very haughty. If you are not a little more stern, no one will listen to you.” Elder Liu smiled and said to Xiao Yan after sending off the surrounding crowd.

Xiao Yan smiled but did not voice any opinions regarding this.

“Come, come, Xiao Yan. I will introduce a person to you.” Elder Liu’s gaze swept once across this level of the ancient tower before he pulled Xiao Yan toward a lady in a silver-colored dress. From her appearance, she was that Han Yue who had the qualification to enter the sixth level of the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to train.

“This is Han Yue. She has already entered the Inner Academy for three years and can be considered your senior. Ke ke, her strength is also not ordinary. Moreover, she formed the ‘Moon Spirit’ faction within the Inner Academy. Her strength is not weak. There are few factions that dare to provoke her in the Inner Academy.” Elder Liu smiled as he introduced her after arriving in front of the silver-dressed lady.

“Oh?”

Surprise flashed across Xiao Yan’s face as he heard Elder Liu’s introduction. His gaze sized-up this lady called Han Yue. During their first

encounter, the latter's icy mountain snow lotus like cold and indifferent disposition left him with a somewhat deep impression. The most shocking thing was this lady's strength. Although he could not see the other party's strength with his naked eye, due to his strong Spiritual Strength, Xiao Yan was able to vaguely sense that this silver-haired woman was much stronger than Luo Hou!

"This inner academy does indeed have hidden dragons and tigers. It is really unexpected that the other party, being a female, would have this kind of strength. Looks like this place... is indeed not an easy place to muddle along." Xiao Yan bitterly laughed in his heart. However, Xiao Yan did not reveal anything on his appearance. He placed Wu Hao, whom he was carrying, onto the ground before extending his hand and smiled as he said, "Nice to meet you, Senior Han Yue."

Seeing Xiao Yan extending his hand toward Han Yue, Elder Liu could not help but be stilled. Knowing the latter's character, he naturally understood that this lady, who had always had an extreme obsession for cleanliness, had some resistance to coming into contact with a man's skin. Even when fighting with others, she would use Dou Qi to firmly wrap herself. Having an obsession of cleanliness to such an extent really caused people to be quite speechless.

However, without waiting for Elder Liu to voice an obstruction, the lady called Han Yue hesitated for a moment before rolling out a white, jade-like wrist from the silver-colored sleeves. After which, she gently held Xiao Yan's hand under Elder Liu's stunned gaze. As they touched lightly and parted, a cool voice, like a spring flowing down a snowy mountain, was clearly emitted.

"Nice to meet you..."

When these few gazes from the ancient tower were shot over from all directions and saw their hands make contact, they were all startled. Immediately, boiling and jealous gazes focused on that black-robed young man, who caused them to gnash their teeth.

Chapter 466: Black Hole

Eyeing Han Yue, who had actually temporarily placed aside her obsession for cleanliness and shook Xiao Yan's hand, Elder Liu also felt a little stunned. He recovered a moment later and shot a glance at Han Yue with a gaze that had a deeper meaning. He laughed, "Xiao Yan ah, you should be privileged to be one of the few male students in the Inner Academy who has ever shaken Yue girl's hand."

"Then I am really honored." Xiao Yan smiled slightly. Although holding that delicate jade-like hand was very comfortable, he merely held it in a courteous manner before releasing it and spoke with a smile.

"Junior Xiao Yan, under your leadership, this year's new students could be considered to have truly stolen the limelight." Han Yue also withdrew her hand as she softly replied.

"If I had known beforehand that there was going to be such trouble in the future, this limelight... it would have been fine even if we didn't have it." Xiao Yan sighed and spoke with a bitter smile.

"Looks like there are already older students who have gone to find trouble?" Han Yue could not help but be a little surprised when she heard this. She immediately came to an abrupt understanding as she nodded her head. A faint, smiling arc appeared at the corner of her mouth.

Xiao Yan helplessly nodded.

"Junior Xiao Yan should know a little about the matters within the Inner Academy, right? You should also know the benefits of having the protection of a faction right? May I know if you have any intention of joining a faction?" Han Yue's bright pupils stared intently at Xiao Yan, as if randomly asking.

"Uh..."

Xiao Yan could not help but spread his hands when he heard this. He smiled bitterly and said, "I'm afraid I cannot enter any. This is because this batch of new students have a heavy reliance on me, and got me to form a

new faction called 'Pan's Gate.' Hence, I can only accept Senior Han Yue's good intentions in my heart."

"You have formed your own faction? And the members are actually all new students?" Han Yue's face could not help but be stunned as Xiao Yan's words sounded. Even Elder Liu threw an extremely shocked gaze toward Xiao Yan.

"Yes." Xiao Yan laughed dryly and nodded when he saw their expressions.

"Junior Xiao Yan. This matter.... might attract a lot of trouble." Han Yue's eyebrows were tightly knit together. She finally spoke in a deep voice a while later.

"Uh? The Inner Academy doesn't seem to have a rule that one cannot form a faction that is made up of new students, right?" Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He could not help but furrow his brows a little when he saw the serious expression on Han Yue's face.

"Ah... there is indeed no such rule. However... the new students who enter the Inner Academy each year occupy sixty percent of all the new blood in the Inner Academy each year. Hence, many factions in the Inner Academy absorb these new students each year, using this method to increase their strength. It has been so all these years and has nearly become a tradition."

"However, now you have roped together all of the new students this year. This results in the other factions being unable to get new recruits this year. This action would definitely invite the dissatisfaction of a lot of factions. After quietly offending so many factions, this 'Pan's Gate' of yours might be marginalized. This is why I say that you will invite a lot of trouble..." Han Yue helplessly shook her head and helped explain the situation to Xiao Yan.

Elder Liu also nodded his head slightly, signaling that what Han Yue said was true.

Hearing Han Yue's explanation, Xiao Yan's face had also gradually become a lot more solemn. Since he was not familiar with the Inner

Academy's customs and traditions, it had resulted in him actually forgetting this stubble. Now that 'Pan's Gate' had just formally been formed, it was really unexpected that it had offended nearly half of the factions in the Inner Academy. With the strength of the current 'Pan's Gate', it was insufficient to handle so many potential enemies.

"Ah. I have been reckless..." Xiao Yan sighed gently. He mused for awhile before he smiled and continued speaking to Han Yue, "However, matters have already developed to this point. I, too, have no solution. We can only block the soldiers that come with generals and pile the soil to block the water that arrives. If there really is a faction that wants to destroy 'Pan's Gate,' I, Xiao Yan, would not just wait to die, that's all I can say."

TL: block the soldiers that come with generals and pile the soil to block the water that arrives – to react to the situation when it happens.

Han Yue sighed and nodded. She did not expect that Xiao Yan would actually form his own faction so quickly. This caused her to swallow her thought of roping him in. Even though Xiao Yan's potential may be quite good, he had just entered the Inner Academy. His current strength was only at the Da Dou Shi level. Acting in this manner would undoubtedly create many enemies. However, this 'Pan's Gate' faction of theirs was insufficient to handle this many opponents.

"If there is anything that you need help with in the future, you can come and find me. I will do my best to be of assistance." Han Ye was quiet for a moment before she lifted her eyes and slowly spoke to Xiao Yan.

"Ke ke, in that case, thank you very much, Senior Han Yue." Xiao Yan smiled and nodded when he heard this. No matter how one put it, being able to say such words when their 'Pan's Gate' was in this kind of isolated situation, she was at the very least a person that he could befriend superficially speaking, even though he did not know if these words were simply just perfunctory or not.

"Don't be in a hurry to thank me. There may be not much that I can do. Moreover, this is all on the account of your potential." Han Yue shook her head and said in a cool voice.

“I understand. If I were just an ordinary new student of the Inner Academy, I’m afraid that I would not be treated this courteously by the two of you.” Xiao Yan smiled faintly. He was not a fool. There are some things that he saw clearer than anyone else. If it were not because of his talent and potential, Elder Liu, who had the position of Elder and Han Yue, who possessed quite a great amount of strength within the Inner Academy, would definitely not give him special respect. This was the Inner Academy. The rule of strength being supreme penetrated through everyone and everything!

Although Xiao Yan’s words were direct, Han Yue and Elder Liu both nodded slightly. Everyone was sensible. It would be inferior if they were to still speak in a secretive manner.

“Alright, Junior Xiao Yan, you should first wander around the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ with Elder Liu. I still need to go to the sixth level, and shall not linger about much longer. We can chat if we have the opportunity to do so in the future.” Han Yue bowed slightly toward Xiao Yan before she immediately turned around and slowly walked to a certain spot of the ancient tower.

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. His gaze sent Han Yue off. Only after her back disappeared at the edge of the warm light did he withdraw his gaze.

“Hee hee, Xiao Yan, what do you think of that Yue girl?” From the side, Elder Liu smiled as he watched Xiao Yan withdraw his gaze and asked.

“Not bad. I think that those pursuing Senior Han Yue in the Inner Academy are in large number.” Xiao Yan smiled as he replied. With Han Yue’s appearance and disposition, she definitely did not lack suitors.

“There are indeed quite a number of suitors. However, there are extremely few that her eyes fancy. Her attitude toward you seems to be quite a good start. With your training talent and adding the training in the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,’ I’m afraid that in one year’s time, you will be able to enter the Dou Ling class. At that time, you might be able to become the best suited suitor.” Elder Liu teased.

“Ke ke, Senior Han Yue is indeed not bad, but I don’t have that kind of

intention...” Xiao Yan smiled and shook his head. He eyed Elder Liu’s strange expression and did not continue to be entangled on this problem. With a smile, he pulled away from the question, “Elder Liu has yet to introduce this ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to this student.”

“Oh. I nearly forgot about that. Ke ke... fellow me.” Elder Liu hurriedly patted his head after being reminded by Xiao Yan. He smiled apologetically and immediately turned around to lead the way. Xiao Yan followed close behind.

This ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ was buried underground, revealing only the peak of the tower. The interior of the tower was so spacious, that it was beyond Xiao Yan’s expectations. As he walked along the way, Xiao Yan realized that it was likely that the space in this first level of the tower was sufficient for five hundred people to train simultaneously.

Training rooms of varying sizes were built within the rounded space of the interior of the tower. However, most of the training rooms were occupied at the moment. Moreover, there were some small red tags hanging above the doors of these rooms. However, the words written on the tags were actually not all the same. Xiao Yan came to a stop and took a look. The words High Grade, Middle Grade, and Low Grade were actually written on these red tags. These were probably the distinction between the grades of the training rooms within the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ that Atai had mentioned.

As he walked from the east to the west, Xiao Yan realized that it seemed that all the high grade training rooms were close to the middle of the tower. Distributed around them was the middle grade training rooms and the low grade training rooms were the furthest from the center.

“In the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,’ these High, Middle, and Low grade training rooms are usually fought for with one’s strength. Those who are strong will be able to obtain the best training conditions. Those whose strengths are weaker can only go to the low grade training room at the outermost regions to train.” Elder Liu pointed at a training room where a High Grade tag was hung as he spoke with a faint smile.

“At the same level, no matter what grade the training room is, their training fee is all the same. For example, in the first level, a low grade training room requires a ‘Fire Energy’ to train for one day and this is also the same for a high grade training room...”

“The fee that one must spend is the same but the effects that one obtains are worlds apart. Won’t this result in a situation the strong becoming stronger and the weak having difficulty catching up?” Xiao Yan asked doubtfully.

“Without facing adversity, it is very hard for someone’s potential to be completely unleashed. What we need is this kind of different oppression. As long as they are oppressed to the limit, there would be some students who would completely erupt and swiftly catch up with the strong people they would have had difficulty reaching in the past. Until now, this kind of matter has basically appeared every year in the Inner Academy...” Elder Liu shook his head and spoke with a smile.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. His advancing footsteps suddenly paused. If one followed his gaze and looked over, one would realize that they had already walked to the middle of the tower.

“This is...?”

Xiao Yan was slightly startled to watch the bottomless black hole that had appeared in front of him. He slowly took two steps forward and came to the edge of the black hole to carefully glance at the bottom. The darkness continued to extend all the way to the edge of one’s sight. That strange darkness that did not even have the slightest bit of light caused Xiao Yan to have a sort of giddy feeling in his head.

This black hole appeared to penetrate the entire ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ If it was not because of the top of the tower covering it, one might be able to clearly see this dark black, deep hole with a glance from the sky.

If one was to carefully sense this black hole, one would seemingly be able to feel that the air coming from this place was much hotter than other places. That feeling... it appeared that there was something at the bottom of the deep hole that was continuously emitting and supplying a

hot energy to the entire 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.'

Xiao Yan extended his palm and grabbed at the illusionary hot air. There was something within his body which suddenly leaped once.

Xiao Yan's throat rolled slightly. He extended his head slightly forward as his eyes stared intently at the deep darkness. A long while later, green-colored flame from within his body suddenly swarmed up into his pupils. In an instant, his dark, black eyes turned into green-flaming eyes.

As the green flame swarmed into his eyes, that bottomless darkness below began to become fainter in an extremely strange manner.

However, just as the darkness was becoming increasingly faint, all the hairs on Xiao Yan's body suddenly stood erect.

Under the focus of that pair of green flamed eyes, some slight distortion began to form in the space of the endless darkness. Quickly following this, the distorted space was like an invisible python as it began to climb toward the entrance of the hole at an extremely frightening speed.

"Xiao Yan, move aside!"

Just as the distorted space was about to climb up, a cry suddenly sounded next to Xiao Yan's ear. Immediately, a shriveled hand grabbed his shoulders and pulled strongly, bringing him far away from this dark hole.

Not long after Xiao Yan was pulled away from the hole, he suddenly felt the temperature swiftly rising around him. After which, he heard an extremely sharp hissing sound that came spreading out from the deep hole. He hurriedly raised his head and took a look. However, his face suddenly solidified. His mouth shivered as a hoarse voice spilled out from the gap between his teeth with great difficulty.

"This... this... what is this... thing?"

Chapter 467: The Mysterious Invisible Fire Python

“Hiss hss...”

The unusual sound was like flashing lightning that repeatedly spread and resounded within the black hole. An instant later, the somewhat dark environment suddenly brightened. The temperature in the air also rose swiftly. An extremely frightening and ancient aura slowly surfaced from within the black hole. Finally, it appeared to be like the lightning which tore open the dark night, erupting from the nearly endless profound darkness.

Xiao Yan's face stiffened as he eyed that exit of the hole. His throat involuntarily rolled once.

At this moment, the area that was two meters above the hole had become extremely distorted. Although the space had become extremely distorted, one could not see anything using the naked eye. Other than that distorted space and the repeated hissing sound, the entire area turned slightly strange because of this scene.

Elder Liu's face was also extremely solemn. He repeatedly pulled Xiao Yan and stepped back. When his eyes looked at the distorted space, fear flashed across them. Although he could not see what exactly was there, he had also heard some things after being an Elder in the tower for so many years. Hence, he also knew just how terrifying the thing within the deep darkness was...

The naked eyes could not see anything, but Xiao Yan's pair of pupils, which was covered by the 'Green Lotus Core Flame,' was able to clearly see the frightening thing that sprang from within the dark hole. Immediately, his body, which was being dragged back by Elder Liu, suddenly stiffened.

With those pupils that contained the green-colored flames, Xiao Yan clearly saw that the thing that had violently surfaced from the endless

darkness was actually an enormous fire python, which was shockingly over ten meters thick and had an unknown length...

The body of the fire python was covered by twisted flames. It widened its large mouth. Fangs, that were as large as Xiao Yan's thigh, carried a distorted ripple. A pair of enormous triangular eyes had invisible flames being repeatedly spit out of them. These flames were no stranger to Xiao Yan. This was because he had tasted the bitterness of this flame earlier. Of course, the thing that appeared in his heart had been just a wisp of shapeless flame. Compared to this enormous python, which appeared to be completely agglomerated from fire, what he felt before was undoubtedly the difference between a firefly and a bright moon. As he felt the strength of the fire python, Xiao Yan did not doubt that even an elite Dou Huang would likely be instantly turned into ashes should his body come into contact with it!

The fire python carried a ferocious roar as it shot out from the darkness. However, just as it was about to reach a spot, five meters above the entrance of the black hole, the surrounding space abruptly began to fluctuate. With the help of the green flame, Xiao Yan could vaguely see that the space surrounding the black hole appeared to become extremely distorted as it formed a spatial cage at this very moment. The invisible fire python may have massive strength, but when it collided with its spatial restraints, it merely caused the cage to ripple a little. There was no other effect.

Realizing that it was hopeless to attempt to break free, the fire python could not help but become a little crazed. Invisible flames were spat out from its enormous mouth in all directions and it repeatedly incinerated the spatial cage. Unfortunately, no matter how it burned, that space cage still stood very firmly!

After wildly struggling for a while, the invisible fire python was finally exhausted. It faced the sky, and let out a hissing sound that contained its furious rage. After which, one could only see that the space repeatedly distorted as the fire python once again became meek and drilled back into the deep dark hole.

As the fire python disappeared, the space cage finally became thinner and eventually disappeared.

Elder Liu heaved a sigh of relief when he sensed the surrounding temperature falling. He muttered, "That was close, but why did this thing suddenly awaken?"

Beside him, Xiao Yan also gradually recovered from the shock. The green-colored flame in his eyes swiftly withdrew as he asked in a hoarse voice, "Elder Liu. That... what is that thing?"

Recovering from Xiao Yan's question, Elder Liu's face became solemn as he watched the former. He said in a deep voice, "Do not tell anyone else about what you saw today. Originally, students are not allowed to come this close to the middle region of the tower. Today, I have neglected my duty. Fortunately, it was my turn to be on duty today. Otherwise, there would definitely be some unavoidable trouble."

Xiao Yan nodded when he saw Elder Liu's solemn face. He spread his hand innocently, "I did not see anything. It is just that I suddenly felt the temperature rise a lot. Additionally, there was some noise coming from the black hole."

"It is naturally for the best if you did not see anything. There are some things which you are better being ignorant about. It is best that you do not come here in the future. Otherwise, if you are discovered, you will be punished along with the Elders on duty." Elder Liu sighed in relief. He did not doubt Xiao Yan's words. After all, even he himself, could not see that frightening thing. He could merely rely on his perception of the distortion and curvature of space in order to judge just what form this invisible being had.

Hearing the sternness in Elder Liu's voice, Xiao Yan's expression also involuntarily changed. Immediately, he hurriedly nodded.

"Alright, let's go..." Elder Liu's expression became a little warmer when he saw Xiao Yan nod his head. He once again glanced at the bottomless deep pit with a lingering fear before turning his body and walking away.

Xiao Yan once again nodded. After which, he followed him. When he

was about to turn the corner, he tilted his head and looked at the bottomless black hole, which had once again descended into silence. His heart carried a faint shock as he muttered softly, "What exactly is that thing? That aura... it's too strong. That space cage is also too overwhelming. It actually did not have the slightest reaction under the destruction caused by this frightening thing. This 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' is indeed filled completely with mysteries..."

After exiting the middle region, Elder Liu also recovered his earlier calm. He once again brought Xiao Yan to carefully stroll along the first level within the tower. Wherever he passed, he would repeatedly speak about some of the rules within the tower and other things which he needed to watch out for. Many things were trivial, causing him to appear like an ordinary old man.

As they walked, they would occasionally meet some students. When they saw Xiao Yan, who was having an enjoyable talk with Elder Liu, they were all a little shocked. Due to the status and identity of these tower guardian Elders, they were usually very stern toward the students. Hence, many students were respectful and afraid of them. Other than some older students, who had quite great strength, seldom did they see any Elders treating a new student this politely.

All of these shocked gazes along the way also caused Xiao Yan to understand the deterrence that this Elder Liu had here. As the saying goes, one would be able to work better if one had someone in the imperial court. Now that he had just arrived, it would naturally be for the best for him to be able to form some connections. No matter how great his potential was, at the very least, he was merely a Da Dou Shi. This kind of strength really did not have anything commendable in the eyes of Elder Liu, who had already reached the Dou Wang class.

"Xiao Yan, your 'Pan's Gate' faction has just been formed. I recommend that when you all enter the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' for now you should not attempt to snatch any high grade training rooms..." Elder Liu suddenly said with a faint smile when they walked to a spot and saw that there were much less people.

Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this, but immediately nodded his head. He also had such thoughts. During this little time that he had entered the Inner Academy, it would undoubtedly cause even more people to be dissatisfied with this 'Pan's Gate' of theirs if they wanted to occupy the best training areas. It was likely that when the group of them entered the place, there would be some factions who would come and expel them. Compared to those older factions, other than Xiao Yan and a few Da Dou Shi, most of the others did not have the strength to contend with older factions. Moreover, in this kind of fight between factions, just relying on the few of them would undoubtedly fail to obtain the effect of turning things around.

"As the Academy has some rules, us, these tower guardian Elders cannot interfere in the fight between students for training rooms. Hence, as long as no fatalities occur, we will not intervene most of the time." Elder Liu mused for awhile before he smiled and said, "However, as long as one Dou Ling can swiftly appear in that 'Pan's Gate' of yours, you would have the qualification to be ranked among the second tier factions of the Inner Academy. At that time, you can go and participate in the fight for training rooms. I think that this should be very soon, given your potential."

"Having a strong Dou Ling is only a second tier faction? Then does that not mean that there must be an elite Dou Wang present in order to be considered a top tier faction?" Xiao Yan asked in a stunned manner.

"Ke ke, that is not really the case. Normally, if three or four strong Dou Ling appear within a single faction, it can be considered a top tier faction..." Elder Liu shook his head as he replied.

Xiao Yan quietly sighed in relief after hearing this. With Xun Er's and the other two's talent, it was likely that they would similarly not need much time. It appeared that the future 'Pan's Gate' needed to keep a low profile for a short while. As long as they waited until the four of them advanced to the Dou Ling class, everything would improve. Before this, however, they could only quietly huddle up.

As they conversed and walked, Xiao Yan and Elder Liu arrived at the entrance. Wu Hao, who was still at this spot, had also woken up from his

unconscious state. He was standing at a loss in the spot, and only sighed in relief when he saw Xiao Yan's figure.

Seeing Wu Hao walking over swiftly, Xiao Yan smiled to Elder Liu, cupped his hands and said, "Elder Liu, thank you very much for your lessons. Let's stop here for today. If I have time in the future, I will come again to seek your advice."

"Ke ke, weren't you planning on training here for awhile today?" Elder Liu smiled and asked.

"'Pan's Gate' has just been established. I need to go back and help manage it." Xiao Yan smiled as he rejected Elder Liu's good intention.

"Yes, that's true. A new faction is very weak. You are indeed going to be busy." Elder Liu smiled and nodded without insisting. His gaze swept around him as he spoke with soft laughter, "The next time you bring people to the first level to train, I will help you find the best place among the Middle Grade Training Rooms. Training at that place will not be much worse than training in a High Grade Training Room."

"There is also good and bad training rooms of the same grade?" Xiao Yan was somewhat surprised when he heard this.

"Ke ke. That is only natural. However, an ordinary student would have great difficulty discovering these things. Only us, the Tower Guardian Elders, understand the difference..." Elder Liu laughed in a proud manner.

"In that case, thank you very much, Elder Liu..." Xiao Yan nodded his head in surprise. He once again cupped his hands toward Elder Liu before turning around, and stepping toward Wu Hao before he walked out, supporting the latter.

Elder Liu fondled his beard as he eyed the two backs that had disappeared from the entrance of the tower. He muttered, "'Heavenly Flame'... it is really unexpected. The rise of the Inner Academy relies on that kind of thing... but now, a little fellow, who isn't even twenty years old, already possesses this kind of mysterious object for himself. Ah, he really is a fellow who is so lucky that it causes one to be unable to help but be jealous."

Chapter 468: Troublesome Matter

Xiao Yan stood just outside the door after exiting the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ He lifted his head and eyed this mysterious black tower, where only the top of it was exposed. He was unable to resist letting out a long breath. For some unknown reason, he constantly felt that this black tower was not that simple...

“Hu, it is really unexpected... it actually agglomerated a ‘Fire Spirit’ with emotions and intelligence. Tsk tsk. No wonder the Inner Academy is so strict. They even created a ‘Space Lock,’ which even an elite Dou Zun would have to use all his might in order to cast...” Just as Xiao Yan was sighing, Yao Lao’s surprised voice suddenly sounded in his heart.

Xiao Yan was slightly startled when he heard Yao Lao’s words. His expression did not change as he looked all around him. After which, he waved his hand toward Wu Hao, who still appeared slightly giddy. After which, he turned his body and walked on the path which they had used to travel here earlier.

“What is the ‘Fire Spirit’ that teacher just mentioned?” Xiao Yan walked at a steady pace, that was neither fast nor slow, along this road lined with trees. Only then did he inquire about this in his heart.

“An alternate life form that is created from pure flames... that invisible flame serpent that you saw earlier should be the intelligence that was created from within the ‘Fallen Heart Flame.’ It can even be said that the fire python is the original body of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ within this ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower!’” Yao Lao slowly explained.

“What? That fire python is the ‘Fallen Heart Flame?’” Xiao Yan’s footsteps suddenly paused. His expression involuntarily changed a little as he could not help but let out a startled cry.

“Yes, I should not have sensed wrongly... Those strange flames between the Heavens and Earth would grow into various different unique forms after being accumulated over time. An example is the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ which you met in the lava underground. That plant form that is

similar to a lotus is only formed after the core flame has undergone thousands of years of suppression...” Yao Lao said in a deep voice.

“Of course, the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ which we found last time may possess a plant form but it had not formed an emotion or intelligence that belonged to it. However, earlier... I truly felt that fire python. This kind of flame body, which possesses intelligence that belongs to itself, is what we call a ‘Fire Spirit.’ Its intelligence should be comparable with some ultimate Magical Beasts that can possess a human form.”

“Then... how do we refine this kind of ‘Fire Spirit’ even if we obtain it? Earlier, I also sensed the frightening aura of that thing. I’m afraid that even a strong Dou Huang might not be its match. How can we swallow it?” Yao Lao’s words caused Xiao Yan to feel shocked. He did not expect that even a flame was able to form its own consciousness. However, now that this flame already had its own consciousness, it would definitely not be willing to be swallowed and refined by other people. Seeing the frightening aura that it displayed earlier, Xiao Yan immediately became dispirited.

“It is indeed very difficult... however there is no other choice. Of course, it does not matter if you are willing to give up this ‘Fallen Heart Flame,’ and go and search for other ‘Heavenly Flames.’” Yao Lao laughed faintly.

“What joke are you cracking... are ‘Heavenly Flames’ so easy to find?”

Xiao Yan immediately cried out within his heart when he heard this. After spending a couple of years, he had obtained the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ by relying solely on luck. Now that he had found the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ after much difficulty, how would he be willing to give it up?

“In that case we can only wait and see... actually let’s not mention how we are going to handle it after we get the ‘Fallen Heart Flame.’ Just how do we obtain it is already filled with numerous problems.” Yao Lao’s voice contained a tone as if he had a headache, “The strong people in this Inner Academy are as numerous as the clouds. In the tower earlier, I could vaguely sense that there exists extremely faint but powerful auras a few levels below. The strength of these auras is such that in my current

spiritual form, it is impossible for me to gain much advantage when fighting with them.”

Xiao Yan’s knit his brows as his ten fingers were tightly hooked together.

“Moreover, at this moment, I can confirm that the reason the Inner Academy is able to increase the training speed of the students is basically due to the existence of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’... They sealed the ‘Fallen Heart Flame,’ which had formed a spirit, into the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,’ borrowing its effect of letting the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ form a split body at the invocation of a person’s heart when he is close to it. This allows the students to use it to strengthen their Qi Paths and refine Dou Qi...

“They... are... rearing the ‘Fallen Heart Flame!’” Yao Lao slowly exhaled a breath of cool air as he faintly exclaimed.

Xiao Yan’s hands, which were held together, abruptly trembled. He wiped the cold sweat on his forehead without leaving a trace. In his heart, he continued to feel shock at these crazy and bold actions of the Inner Academy. These fellows were really too frightening. They actually had the courage to try to tame a thing that had the greatest destructive forces between the Heavens and Earth.

Only after Yao Lao’s explanation did Xiao Yan understand that the Inner Academy had reared the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ like one would rear a dairy cow. After which, they repeatedly obtained an unending amount of ‘milk’ from it; the split bodies of ‘Fallen Heart Flame’... this kind of action could indeed be called insane.

“An expert is indeed bold. This Inner Academy is really frightening...” Xiao Yan swallowed a mouthful of saliva and muttered in his heart.

“Hmph, bold? I think they are playing with fire and will end up getting burned.” Yao Lao coldly snorted.

“Why? From what I saw, there seems to be no problem?” Xiao Yan said in surprise.

“Hei, currently, they are relying on the lock of the ‘Space Cage’, so there

is indeed no problem. However, this is merely an expedient measure. By relying on that 'Space Cage,' it is impossible to continue keeping the 'Fallen Heart Flame' sealed within the tower."

Yao Lao laughed, "A fire can be scattered, but cannot be blocked. This 'Fallen Heart Flame' is a unique flame that is formed from the Heavens and the Earth. It possesses true destructive strength... by sealing and blocking it in this manner, it is like the Inner Academy is building a barrier on the mouth of a volcano. Have you seen anyone who can block a volcano? Its current oppressed manner is merely because it is storing strength. At the time when it erupts, this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' will immediately be destroyed!"

"Even though the 'Fallen Heart Flame' is frightening, those old fellows from the Inner Academy are also not some useless lot. Before the eruption, one will charge and one will block. Both parties will have some losses. At that time, it might perhaps be our chance..."

"Teacher, you mean that we should wait for the 'Fallen Heart Flame' to erupt by itself?" Xiao Yan was startled as he said in a stunned manner.

"Ah, we can only do this. We are small in number and weak in strength. There is no use if we openly do it..." Yao Lao nodded and replied.

"Then when do we need to wait until?" Xiao Yan rolled his eyes and laughed bitterly.

"Based on the counterattack of the 'Fallen Heart Flame' earlier, there might be a turn of events soon. At the very most, it will take two years and at the very least it will take one." Yao Lao mused for a long while before he lowered his voice as he revealed information softly in Xiao Yan's heart.

Xiao Yan's pupils swiftly flashed. A long while later, he carefully watched his surroundings. Other than Wu Hao, who was repeatedly knocked his giddy head, there was no other movement. The words Yao Lao had spoken concerned the matter of the life and death of the Inner Academy.

"In the days that follow, you must make the most of the time and train in the tower. It would be best if you can raise your strength to the Dou

Ling class in half a year's time. At that time, with the inclusion of the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' and the 'Flame Splitting Tsunami,' I think that you can run wild without fear within the Dou Ling class. If you use the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' that is formed from the combination of the Purple and the Green Flame, it is likely that even the Elder Su, from outside the forest back then, would not have the courage to receive it head on with one hand..."

"It would be best that you try your best not to use the large-scale 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' that combines the 'Bone Chilling Flame' and the 'Green Lotus Core Flame.' That thing may have a frightening strength, but its backlash is simply too great. At times, you will lose more than what you gain."

"Additionally, you should go and begin practicing that Di class Agility Dou Technique, 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement.' As long as you successfully practice that thing, you should be able to be in an unshakable position when you face ordinary Dou Lings. Even if you meet a strong Dou Wang, you should have the ability to flee even if you are unable to beat him. We must now agglomerate our strength in preparation for the eruption of the 'Fallen Heart Flame.'"

Yao Lao's voice was like shooting a bullet. His great amount of words caused Xiao Yan to continue smiling bitterly. It was only a long while later before he completely digested those words.

"It seems that there are still the various ingredients for the 'Ground Spirit Pill' right?" After slowly swallowing all of the various reminders from Yao Lao, Xiao Yan mused for a moment only to realize that there was something that Yao Lao missed. Immediately, he spoke with a smile. This thing was also a necessary item. Otherwise, even if he were to obtain the 'Fallen Heart Flame' in the future, it was likely that he would not dare to touch it.

"Uh... indeed. However, those ingredients are all extremely rare items. You need to pay careful attention." Yao Lao was startled before he immediately nodded and responded.

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and nodded. He raised his head and eyed the blue sky before he involuntarily exhaled. Were there not so many troublesome matters...

“Why are you sighing? Is it because of the problems of ‘Pan Gate?’”

A voice suddenly sounded behind him. Xiao Yan turned around and took a look. It was actually Wu Hao. The current him seemed to have recovered from his unconscious state after being grilled by the Heart Flame.

“Ke ke, it’s nothing.” Xiao Yan laughed softly before saying, “Let’s go. We should return and take a look first.” Once he said that, he took the lead to quicken his footsteps, and flew through the road that he had come from earlier. Wu Hao followed close behind.

After nearly forty to fifty minutes, Xiao Yan and Wu Hao gradually moved closer to the residence area of the new students. As he slowly walked into the residence area, the empty road caused the two of them to be startled.

Just as the both of them were somewhat stunned, a human figure suddenly came running out from within the residence area while panting. When he saw Xiao Yan and Wu Hao, joy immediately swarmed onto his face. He rolled and crawled as he rushed over while shouting, “Head, something happened!”

“What is it?” Xiao Yan hurriedly moved forward and asked when he heard the loud cry of this new student.

“There is someone who wants to pull some new students away, but no one agreed in the end. As a result, those fellows wanted to create trouble. Now, they are forcing Senior Xun Er and Hu Jia to fight!”

“Who has come?” Xiao Yan’s expression sunk. He hurriedly walked toward the interior. As he walked, he voiced his question.

When he heard Xiao Yan’s question, that new student involuntarily became a little hesitant. This scene caused Xiao Yan’s footsteps to pause as he said in a deep voice, “Speak!”

“The person leading them... is Bai Shan.” The new student could only

reply with a bitter smile after he was reprimanded.

“This bastard repays kindness by stabbing people in the back!”

After hearing this, Xiao Yan and Wu Hao’s expression instantly became dark.

Chapter 469: Wager

There was a large group of people surrounding a certain part of the interior region of the new student residences. Among this crowd, there were two groups of people who were facing off as they looked at each other in a covetous manner. One group had more people, while the other only had a little more than ten people. However, the situation in the place appeared to be one where the smaller group held the advantage.

“Xun Er, Hu Jia, don’t be stubborn. I have already said that this ‘Pan Gate’ of yours would definitely not be able to rise within the Inner Academy. The new students are essential new blood of the numerous factions in the Inner Academy each year. It is impossible for the factions to sit and watch you hold all the new blood in your hands.” The one leading the smaller group was a young man wearing white clothes. His handsome appearance was such that it was extremely easy for him to attract a favorable impression from women. However, Xun Er and Hu Jia on the opposite side did not display the slightest favorable impression because of it. Instead, they did not hide their expressions of disgust and disdain.

“This is our matter, there is no need for you, a person who abandons his companions, to worry about it.” Hu Jia laughed coldly.

“If you don’t have any other matters to deal with, please leave. Our new students’ residency does not welcome you here.” Xun Er glanced at Bai Shan before she spoke indifferently.

The attitude of these two people caused the corner of Bai Shan’s mouth to twitch involuntarily. His face, which was originally filled with smiles, had also become a lot darker and colder.

“Bai Shan, why do you need to say such nonsense. Directly attack and crush their haughtiness. At that time, there will naturally be people who would choose to follow us and leave.” Laughter was suddenly emitted from a young man with a strong build by Bai Shan’s side. When this man spoke, his eyes would occasionally sweep over the graceful curves of Xun Er’s and

Hu Jia's lovely body.

"Ke ke, Brother Fu Ao is right. However, the opposite side are girls. If we were to fight just after we come, it is unavoidable that others would say that we don't have magnanimity, no?" Bai Shan did not dare ignore that young man. The latter was one of the three strong Dou Lings within his gang, other than his cousin brother. Therefore, he hurriedly replied with a smile.

"Hee hee, you are right." Fu Ao laughed when he heard Bai Shan speak in this manner. His gaze once again turned toward Xun Er and he smiled as he said, "Junior Xun Er, that Xiao Yan may be powerful enough to be able to lead you all to victory in the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition.' Unfortunately, he does not have the qualifications within the Inner Academy. You can also stop having delusional thoughts about his courage and resolution. Maybe in a day or two, after he has suffered greatly, he himself will disband this 'Pan Gate' of yours."

"There is no need to worry about that. As long as Xiao Yan ge-ge has not opened his mouth, this 'Pan Gate' will not be afraid of any faction. You can try if you want to forcefully disband us!" Xun Er looked at him while speaking in a cold voice.

Seeing Xun Er, whose elegant and exquisite face covered with frost, the smile on Fu Ao's face became even richer. He clicked his tongue and said, "What a stubborn girl. However, it is really to my liking... what about this, on account of your face, as long as you hand over five new students today, my 'White Gang' will not come and find trouble with you in the future. What do you say?"

"Big Brother Fu, five..." Hearing this, the expression of Bai Shan at the side changed and he hurriedly opened his mouth. The purpose of him bringing people here was not merely to have five new students.

Fu Ao waved his hand and interrupted Bai Shan's words. He smiled as he eyed Xun Er and said, "Of course, Junior Xun Er must be one of these five people."

Bai Shan's face could not help but sink when these words of Fu Ao fell.

He was currently able to hear that this fellow actually had some intentions toward Xun Er. A fleeting coldness flashed across his eyes.

As Fu Ao's gaze was staring intently at Xun Er, he did not see Bai Shan's expression.

“‘Pan Gate’ will not hand over a single person to any faction!”

Xun Er had naturally heard how Fu Ao had taken liberties within his herds. Her intelligent pupils stared at the former. A long while later, the frostiness on her face suddenly disappeared completely as she said in a calm voice.

Seeing Xun Er, who had once again become indifferent, Fu Ao frowned a little. He did not like women displaying such an expression. Immediately, the smile on his face was also gradually withdrawn. He said coldly, “Since that is the case, looks like I can only use force. I want to see just what credibility you have to retain them after I defeat the strong people in this ‘Pan Gate’ of yours.”

“Then you want to try?” Hu Jia's pretty face was ice-cold. Emerald Dou Qi surged from within her body. A strong force spread over this empty ground.

As Hu Jia's force erupted, the dozens of new students behind her also roared angrily. Numerous different colored Dou Qis swarmed out at the same time. All of a sudden, the leaves on the ground were shaken by the Dou Qi until they were lifted into the air.

“Oh? This batch of new students is indeed as the rumors said. They are boundlessly arrogant...” Fu Ao could not help but give a smile of ridicule when he saw the numerous Dou Qi surfacing. He stomped his footsteps heavily. One could only hear a deep banging sound when a blue-colored Dou Qi instantly covered his body. As the Dou Qi rolled, it appeared as viscous as seawater while it rolled all over his body.

As Fu Ao's Dou Qi swarmed out, a powerful force that was more than a few times stronger than anyone else present began to spread out over the empty ground. He actually relied on just his strength to suppress the force of numerous new students.

“Today, I want to let you see the difference between the older students and the younger ones!” Fu Ao stuck out his loin and laughed coldly, “Bai Shan, bring the people and let these new students understand that merely having tough bones will not help them to survive!”

Bai Shan nodded slightly. His eyes watched Xun Er on the opposite side in a complicated manner. After which, he waved his hand and commanded in a deep voice, “Attack!”

Hearing Bai Shan’s cry, the nearly ten older students behind him immediately let out a soft cry. Their bodies turned into shadows as they shot explosively toward the large group in a lightning-like manner.

“I will block Bai Shan. Xun Er, you lead the others to stop those remaining.” Hu Jia shook her delicate hand. A long, green-colored whip appeared. The whip lashed slightly and a thunderclap sound was emitted in the air. It also faintly carried an unusual fragrance.

“Yes.” Xun Er nodded slightly. Her pupils were icy-cold as she watched the human figures shooting over explosively. A dazzling golden glow surfaced on her small jade-like hands.

“Chi!”

Just as the fight was about to begin, and Bai Shan’s group was about to clash with Xun Er’s group, a black shadow suddenly cut through the sky, immediately carrying the sharp sound of tearing the air. The shadow suddenly shot to a spot between both parties. Immediately, an explosion accompanied by spreading dust isolated both sides.

Fu Ao’s brows furrowed slightly as he eyed the dust-filled region. He waved his sleeves and a breeze that carried some moisture suddenly appeared. It blew over immediately, wetting the dust and causing it to fall.

As the dust fell to the ground, an enormous black-colored ruler, that was inserted into the hard rocky ground, appeared in the eyes of Fu Ao and the others...

After their gazes paused for a moment on the black ruler, everyone turned toward the two people who stood behind it.

“Xiao Yan, Wu Hao, I thought that both of you had run away after hearing some news. It is really unexpected that you dare to return.” Bai Shan’s expression changed slightly as he coldly spoke after seeing the two human figures who had appeared.

Xiao Yan’s gaze coldly glanced at him. After which, it jumped passed him and stopped on Fu Ao’s body. He could sense that this fellow was the strongest person present.

Seeing Xiao Yan and Wu Hao appearance, the new students of ‘Pan Gate’ immediately cheered. After all the things that had happened during this period of time, Xiao Yan had already become the true backbone in their hearts. As long as he was around, they would have the fighting spirit necessary to fight with anyone.

“The two of you have finally returned...” Hu Jia quietly sighed in relief when she saw that skinny back in front of her. No matter how sturdy her heart was, it was ultimately the best for a man to stand in front when it came to such matters.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge. They...” Xun Er’s gaze paused on Xiao Yan’s back as she spoke softly.

Xiao Yan waved his hand and interrupted Xun Er’s words. He said with a faint smile, “Yes, I know. Leave the remaining matters to me.”

Xun Er nodded in a gentle and soft manner as she gazed at that skinny back. She liked his manner of being filled with confidence no matter what he did, just like when he was young.

“You are Xiao Yan?” Fu Ao stared at Xiao Yan, then glanced at Xun Er’s gentleness which was completely different from her coldness earlier. He could not help but knit his eyebrows together and speak with a cold smile.

“He is Xiao Yan. The current leader of these new students.” Bai Shan interrupted and informed him.

“Bai Shan, it really is unexpected that the skin on that face of yours is actually thick to such a degree. My eyes were really dull in the past.” Xiao Yan glanced at Bai Shan and laughed as he spoke. There was a ridicule

that he could not hide in his laughter.

Being mocked in such a matter, a greenness involuntarily surfaced on Bai Shan's face. He gloomily glanced at Xiao Yan and coldly said, "You can be arrogant. I have already said that in the Inner Academy, I have many ways of dealing with you."

"Other than relying on other people's power, what else can you do?" Xiao Yan laughed indifferently.

"You..."

"Alright stop arguing." Fu Ao waved his hands and interrupted the two of them as they mocked one another. He raised his head, eyed Xiao Yan and said calmly, "I shall not argue with you. Hand over fifteen new students to us, the 'White Gang' and we will immediately leave this place."

"And if I don't hand any over?" Xiao Yan's hand was placed on the hilt of the ruler in front of him as he asked with a cold laugh.

"Then I will beat you up until your prestige is completely lost in front of these new students!" Fu Ao parted his mouth and laughed. His dense white teeth emitted a coldness.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He twisted his neck and had just took a step forward when Wu Hao, who stood beside him suddenly extended his hand to stop him. The latter asked, "Let me?"

"This fellow is a Dou Ling. It may be a little difficult for you to handle now." Xiao Yan smiled and shook his head. He pushed Wu Hao's hand away and slowly took a step forward. His gaze paused on Fu Ao's body and laughed softly, "One on one. If you win, we will do as you say. If you lose, your 'White Gang' is not allowed to find trouble with our 'Pan Gate' within three months. How about it? Do you dare to accept?"

Fu Ao's eyes immediately narrowed when he heard this.

"Big Brother Fu. Don't agree with him. That fellow possesses some powerful trump cards. When he uses them, it is sufficient to easily contend with a Dou Ling. The last time, even Luo Hou was defeated by his hands." Bai Shan to the side hurriedly continued, "All of us can attack

together. Although there are many new students, they will definitely not be able to block us all!”

“There is no need. That Luo Hou is but someone who just entered the Dou Ling class. Defeating him is nothing.”

Fu Ao waved his hands. His gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan. Immediately, it turned toward Xun Er behind as he parted his mouth and laughed, “Why don’t we change the stakes. If I win, hand over fifteen people to the ‘White Gang’ with her among them. If I lose, the ‘White Gang’ will not find trouble with all of you for half a year? What do you say?”

The smile on Xiao Yan’s face gradually withdrew until his dark and solemn appearance a moment later had some ferocity hidden within it. A dragon had scales which could not be touched. Those who did so would incur its wrath. Xiao Yan’s untouchable scale was undoubtedly this girl who had placed all her thoughts on him from when they were young...

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, compete!”

A gentle voice suddenly sounded from behind Xiao Yan. Immediately, a soft seemingly boneless delicate hand gently held Xiao Yan tightly clenched fist.

Xiao Yan inhaled a deep breath of air. He turned his head and eyed the green-clothed young lady who was smiling elegantly. Tilting his body slightly, he moved closer to the young lady’s ears under her slightly reddened face. Using a voice that only the two of them could hear, he slowly said, “Girl, I will get rid of the ‘White Gang’ half a year later!”

“Yes.” The young lady suddenly smiled. Her smile was beautiful, gentle and moving, causing the hearts of those by the side to be moved. She had never doubted him ever since she was young.

Chapter 470: Fighting Fu Ao

Xiao Yan gently patted Xun Er's head before he slowly turned around. The darkness on his face had swiftly disappeared as he indifferently looked at Fu Ao on the opposite side. He softly asked, "Shall we begin?"

"Hei, you have courage..."

Seeing that Xiao Yan really dared to fight, Fu Ao could not help but shout in a somewhat astonished manner. He immediately laughed, "Alright. Today, let me see whether this leader of the new students, whose name has caused an uproar within the Inner Academy, is really as strong as rumored."

Seeing the big battle that was about to begin, all the surrounding observing students hurriedly took a few steps back. They had also heard quite a lot of rumors about Xiao Yan. They were naturally extremely happy now that they could judge him with their own eyes.

"I wonder if that Xiao Yan can contend with Fu Ao. If he cannot, I'm afraid that he will really lose a great amount of face."

"Hee hee, it is rumored that Fu Ao has already advanced into the three star Dou Ling level one month ago. This Xiao Yan may be able to defeat Luo Hou, but it is still very difficult and dangerous to fight against Fu Ao."

"If he is careless and loses to Fu Ao, he would not only lose face but also lose his own woman... it would be really funny."

Xiao Yan ignored the numerous private conversations around him. He slowly took a step forward, and his hands swiftly formed some strange seals. As the seals were formed in his hands, wisps of green-colored flame suddenly surged out from the vortex in his body. Finally, it followed a somewhat strange route as it began to swiftly circulate.

When the green-colored flame completed circulating through this strange route once, the green flame could not help but began to seethe a little. Waves of wild, violent energy spread out and finally spread to each and every corner of Xiao Yan's body!

“The First Change of the Sky Fire Three Mysterious Changes, Green Lotus Change!”

“Bang!”

The hand seal suddenly stilled. Powerful green-colored flames surged violently from within Xiao Yan’s body, wrapping him and causing him to become a green-colored fire person.

The fire soared for a moment before it swiftly shrunk back into Xiao Yan’s body. When it shrunk back, everyone could sense that Xiao Yan’s breath was climbing higher and higher. It was actually about to reach the stage of a strong Dou Ling!

“He actually forcefully raised his strength. No wonder he was able to defeat Luo Hou. However, this kind of Secret Technique is ultimately a disadvantage. It cannot last for long and will instead cause enormous damage to his body. Xiao Yan, is this your trump card?” Fu Ao was initially startled when he saw Xiao Yan’s aura becoming stronger all of a sudden. He immediately came to an abrupt understanding as he coldly laughed.

Xiao Yan was still blissfully silent when faced with Fu Ao’s cold laughter. His hand held the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler beside him, tilted his head toward Wu Hao and said faintly, “Keep an eye on Bai Shan’s group.”

“You can rest assured. Hand that offal to me.” Wu Hao nodded. He hesitated slightly before whispering, “Be careful. This Fu Ao is stronger than Luo Hou.”

“Yes.”

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He turned his gaze toward Fu Ao who was smiling coldly opposite of him. Xiao Yan’s feet slowly lifted. After which it fell suddenly, and an energy explosion immediately sounded from his feet. Xiao Yan’s body turned into a black shadow and directly charged at the latter.

“Hmph, today, I will let you get a taste of what it means to be a true elite Dou Ling! Unorthodox means cannot be considered the right path!” The black shadow swiftly grew in Fu Ao’s eyes. He let out a cold snort and

clenched his fist. Blue light flashed. A blue-colored trident, that was nearly five feet long flashed and appeared.

Holding the trident in his hand, Fu Ao pierced toward the black shadow in front of him. A faint blue glow was flashing on the tines. There was even some blue-colored light, which appeared in the space which it passed through.

“Clang!”

The black shadow suddenly paused. The huge black ruler on his hands came whirling over. It collided heavily with the trident. Immediately, the sound of metal colliding carried some sparks as it flashed and appeared on the battleground.

“Your strength is quite great.”

Fu Ao's body shook slightly. He took half a step back as he let out a surprised laugh compared to Xiao Yan who had taken a step back. Immediately, he once again charged into close proximity. Under the cover of the blue-colored Dou Qi in the trident on his hand, it was like an evil shark in the sea, rolling and rising. The force was thick and cold as it carried a faint fierce force.

Xiao Yan's face tensed as he eyed the trident attack that swiftly followed. He shook his hand gently as he directly waved the ruler and went forward to meet Fu Ao without even retreating a little.

Blue-colored Dou Qi and the green-colored flame each occupied half of the sky above the battleground. A faint white-colored fog repeatedly rose. Two ghost-like human figures were flashing and shooting about within the fog. The speed caused even the surrounding crowd watching the fight to be only able to hear the sound of the heavy ruler and the trident colliding and see some sparks bursting forth.

Powerful Dou Qi collided in the battleground, bursting with loud energy sounds. Those energy ripples that repeatedly expanded caused the surrounding crowd to have no choice but to repeatedly step back.

“Can Xiao Yan beat that fellow?” Hu Jia's eyes stared intently at the

human figures flashing in the faint white fog. She could not resist clenching her fists tightly as she asked Xun Er and Wu Hao beside her softly.

“I don’t know.. I cannot see anything now.” Wu Hao shook his head and replied in a deep voice.

“Bang!”

The instant when Wu Hao’s words sounded, an explosion that shook the ears of everyone until they felt pain was suddenly emitted from the white fog. Immediately, two human figures shot out of the white fog. Their legs were dragged along the ground for over ten meters before they finally came to a stop.

“Hee hee. Good. You do indeed have some ability. No wonder you dare to be so arrogant.” Fu Ao placed the trident in his hand heavily onto the ground as he panted intensely, and spoke with a cold smile.

Xiao Yan’s heavy ruler was inserted into the crack line on the ground. His breathing was similarly a little hurried. After using the ‘Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change’ to forcefully strengthen himself, he was able to contend with Fu Ao head on without losing, and was even able to beat the latter by a little in terms of strength. However... all of these had a short time limit. Once the effect of the increased strength of the green lotus change faded away, he would have difficulty continuing to fight with Fu Ao.

Fu Ao had also clearly saw Xiao Yan’s weakness. He laughed sinisterly as the trident in his hands suddenly shook. Immediately, the blue-colored Dou Qi on it suddenly soared. Following the increase in the density of the Dou Qi on the tridents, Fu Ao’s face also became a strange blue color.

Sensing the swiftly agglomerating Dou Qi energy on Fu Ao’s trident, Xiao Yan’s expression changed slightly. He could sense the degree of strength of this attack of Fu Ao.

“Let’s settle this with one blow!”

The trident in Fu Ao’s hand abruptly rotated before it was immediately

pointed at Xiao Yan. The former parted his mouth and smiled. His feet stepped on the ground and his body turned into a blue-colored shadow that shot out explosively. As his body did so, the blue-colored Dou Qi on the trident swiftly rolled. Finally, it actually faintly formed an energy shark that was completely agglomerated from Dou Qi.

The blue energy shark widened its mouth and its sharp teeth were set off by the blue-colored Dou Qi such that it reflected a dark, thick, cold glow. It resulted in people having not the slightest doubt that they would definitely receive a fatal blow if they were bitten by it.

Dou Qi agglomerating into objects, the mark of a Dou Ling. It was a specialized ability of a strong person at the Dou Ling class or above, just like the Dou Qi cloak of a Dou Shi, and the Dou Qi Armor of a Da Dou Shi. The lethality of this kind of Dou Qi agglomerated item would undoubtedly have an extremely powerful effect when used in combination with Dou Techniques.

A Dou Qi shark, over ten feet long, shot explosively toward Xiao Yan. His gaze passed through the somewhat transparent Dou Qi shark, and was able to see the incomparably sharp trident hidden within its stomach.

Xiao Yan's eyes stared intently at the shark which was swiftly being enlarged in his eyes. The bloody wind that was pouncing at him caused Xiao Yan's face to become increasingly solemn. His arm shook a little. Green-colored flames passed through his Qi Paths and surged out, finally covering the entire dark black ruler within it. After finishing this action, he held the ruler's hilt with both hands and slowly raised it above his head. The Dou Qi within his body was being circulated until its limit at this moment!

"Break!"

Xiao Yan's eyes abruptly shrunk. A deafening cry was shouted out from Xiao Yan's throat. Immediately, the heavy ruler, which was wrapped in the dense green-colored flames, was abruptly hacked downward, just like it was splitting a mountain.

As the heavy ruler was hacked downward, one could see that the

surrounding air had become a little distorted. The high temperature evaporated all the water that had been lodged in the ground around him.

Under the observations of everyone around, the heavy ruler that was wrapped by the green-colored flame heavily collided with the Dou Qi shark.

“Bang!”

The moment the two came into contact, a muffled explosion sounded. Fog that permeated the air began to surge out with a hissing sound from the point of contact. A water wave that contained some fluctuations of the green-colored flame seedling formed a ripple shape as it spread out in all directions. It rinsed all of the things above the ground wherever it passed.

Fu Ao's expression was a little ugly within the fog. He eyed the trident that was locked by the heavy ruler. The green-colored flame that was rising on the latter was not only not extinguished by the energy water shark, but rather had instead caused the energy water shark, that was agglomerated by Dou Qi, to instantly boil into vapor that permeated the sky the moment that they came into contact. This sudden situation was something that Fu Ao had never expected.

Fu Ao's hands held the handle of the trident tightly. His arms shook as he felt a little fear from the great strength that was transmitted from the heavy ruler.

Xiao Yan's face also became completely flushed. This was an appearance caused by having displayed his strength to its limits. His eyes stared intently at Fu Ao who was only two feet from him. A dense arc was suddenly lifted from the corner of his mouth.

Xiao Yan's throat rolled slightly. A strange voice repeatedly brewed within his throat. Following the brewing of the voice, Xiao Yan's mouth also bulged. A moment later, he lifted his hand and opened his tightly shut mouth.

“Roar!”

As Xiao Yan opened his mouth, the thunderclap-like sound of a lion roar

mightily surged forth, causing those people observing from the surrounding to hurriedly do their best to cover their ears, which were shaken until they felt pain.

Since even the ears of the surrounding observers were still in the throes of pain, it was an even heavier blow for Fu Ao, who was less than two feet from Xiao Yan.

While Fu Ao had felt that something was amiss before the sonic wave was emitted, he did not immediately pull back. Hence, he completely received this 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar' from Xiao Yan head on.

Fu Ao's hands trembled rapidly. Under this roar from Xiao Yan, which was like thunder from the clear sky, some blood traces seeped out from Fu Ao's ears. It appeared like bells and gongs were ringing in his head, turning into a complete mess.

The moment Fu Ao was shaken by the 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar,' Xiao Yan released his heavy ruler. His body turned and appeared on Fu Ao's left side in a ghost-like manner. His face was dark and solemn as his tightened fist carried a sharp wind sound from having cut through the air and ruthlessly smashed into Fu Ao's face under the watch of numerous shocked gazes around him.

"Boom!"

The fist collided with flesh. A soft and low sound caused the hearts of all those observers around to leap. Immediately, they saw Fu Ao fly like a kite with a broken string as his body rolled a couple of times in midair before it heavily smashed and landed on the ground dozens of meters away. No one knew if he was still alive...

The instant that Fu Ao's body smashed onto the ground, the surrounding audience became deathly quiet!

Chapter 471: The Strength of The White Gang

The atmosphere was solidified and quiet in this spacious, empty ground. One by one, numerous gazes stared at the unmoving Fu Ao who lay dozens of meters away. There was a shock that was difficult to hide within their gazes.

This was a three star elite Dou Ling. With Fu Ao's strength, he could enter the top seventy, even if placed within the entire Inner Academy. Now, however, he was defeated by a new student who had just arrived in the Inner Academy no more than five days ago. Moreover, this defeat... was actually miserable to such an extent. They thought of how Fu Ao was still acting triumphantly just ten minutes ago only to end up currently lying not far away like a dead dog. This comical scene really caused everyone watching from around him to feel a bizarre feeling.

"Cough, cough, cough..."

An intense coughing sound suddenly sounded in the empty ground, breaking the quiet atmosphere

The heavy ruler in Xiao Yan's hand made contact with the ground. One of his knees was involuntarily placed on the ground. Some paleness appeared on his delicate and handsome face. Dense amounts of cold sweat repeatedly seeped out from his forehead. Looking from his hurried breathing, it was clear that this victory was not without a price.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, are you alright?" A figure flashed and appeared at Xiao Yan's side. Her delicate hand looped around Xiao Yan's waist. That green-clothed young lady could not help but speak with heartache as she eyed the pale white face belonging to Xiao Yan.

"I'm fine. It is just the backlash for forcefully raising my strength," Xiao Yan lifted his body up with great difficulty as he clenched his teeth and shook his head. The 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' may allow him to raise his strength for a short period of time, but the damage that the wild

energy caused within his body was also quite extreme. If it was not because Xiao Yan was an alchemist and he had Yao Lao, an extremely experienced Alchemist Grandmaster helping him from within, it was likely that even he wouldn't dare to use this technique carelessly. Even though this was the case, his body would feel terrible pain every time he used it.

Xiao Yan's hand rested on Xun Er's delicate shoulder. His eyes coldly glanced at Fu Ao, who lay some distance away. Originally, this fellow would not lose so miserably, However, he underestimated the extent at which a 'Heavenly Flame' restrained water affinity Dou Qi. It was likely that Xiao Yan would also not dare to fight head on against that powerful attack which combined Dou Skill and a Dou Qi agglomerated object had it been an element which was not suppressed by the 'Heavenly Flame.'

However, regardless of whether there was the element of luck in this fight, Xiao Yan had obtained victory. This was already sufficient!

Xiao Yan took a medicinal pill for healing internal injuries from his storage ring and stuffed it into his mouth. Only then did he turn his head and throw his gaze toward Bai Shan's group.

Seeing Xiao Yan's sharp, knife-like gaze being thrown over, the group of people from the 'White Gang,' including Bai Shan, could not resist taking two steps back. Their faces were filled with vigilance as they watched Xiao Yan.

"Fu Ao has lost. Take him away. Remember your promise to us. There are quite a number of witnesses present. If you want to go back on your word, this 'White Gang' of yours will be completely discredited." Xiao Yan did not adopt any overly stimulating action and merely spoke in a cold voice.

"This fool thinks so highly of himself. He thinks no one can beat him just because he is a three star Dou Ling. Now, not only did he lose, he also left Xiao Yan and Pan's Gate half a year to develop. After half a year, it is likely that Older Cousin will have to personally come here if they want to remove 'Pan's Gate'!" Bai Shan gnashed his teeth and cursed angrily in his

heart as he eyed Fu Ao, lying not far away like a dead dog.

“Let’s go!” Bai Shan’s entire body felt uncomfortable as he was stared at by Xiao Yan’s stark, cold gaze. A moment later, he finally waved his hand as he cried out with a depressed and extremely unwilling tone.

Once he said this, he took the lead in turning around and swiftly walked out of the new students’ residency. Behind him, a few ‘White Gang’ members hurriedly followed. Two people stepped out and grabbed Fu Ao as they passed by him along the way.

Seeing the group of people disappearing from the edge of their sight in a miserable looking manner, those members of ‘Pan’s Gate,’ whose nerves were tense, finally sighed in relief. However, this time, they did not let out any cheers. They exchanged glances with one another and saw an urgentness in each other’s eyes. What they saw, was an urgentness for their strength to increase.

Although they had only just entered the Inner Academy a couple days ago, they were truly able to sense the importance that strength had in the Inner Academy. Previously, they could all be considered among the best in the Outer Academy. However, now they were the most ordinary members within the Inner Academy. In order to be able to not receive a humiliation like the one today, they must raise their strength as quickly as possible. They clearly understood in their hearts that it was impossible to completely rely on Xiao Yan and the others to bear all the matters within this Inner Academy. As members of ‘Pan’s Gate,’ they also needed to contribute!

“Everyone, the show’s over. Please take your leave.” Xiao Yan cupped his hands and smiled at the surrounding older students who were watching as he spoke.

Hearing Xiao Yan’s guest expelling order, those observers around also cupped their hands toward Xiao Yan in an extremely polite manner. After which, they walked out in small groups, repeatedly engaging in private conversations along the way. It was likely that they were discussing the fight that had concluded earlier.

“Ke ke, Xiao Yan ge-ge, I’m afraid that very soon, the matter of you defeating Fu Ao will spread throughout the Inner Academy.” Xun Er smiled lovingly as she supported Xiao Yan.

“This is also good. At the very least, it should be able to frighten those factions that have some ill intentions toward our ‘Pan’s Gate.’” Xiao Yan sighed again. He raised his head and eyed those members of the ‘Pan’s Gate’, who were looking at him fervently. He slowly said, “Everyone, I think now all of you understand just how important strength is within this Inner Academy, right?”

“Yes!” The dozens of new students nodded uniformly.

“Without strength, we can only be bullied by people who block our entrance! Do you all want to endure what happened today a second time?” Xiao Yan questioned in a deep voice.

“No!” A flush suddenly swarmed onto the faces of all the new students. The blood in their hearts boiled as they roared.

“From tomorrow on, the members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ will begin to enter the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to train. By relying on Fu Ao’s defeat today, there should not be any other factions coming to find trouble with us for a short period of time. Hence, we must raise our strength as quickly as possible during this period of time!” Xiao Yan’s voice was low as he spoke.

“Moreover, by defeating Fu Ao today, we have undoubtedly given the ‘White Gang’ a ruthless slap to the face. Hence, they will definitely not let this matter rest. Due to their promise, they will perhaps not attack us during this half a year’s time. However, once half a year has passed, the ‘White Gang’ will definitely show up!”

“In order for us to be able to resist the ‘White Gang’ in half a year’s time, the matter of raising your strength is extremely urgent!”

All the members of the ‘Pan’s Gate’ had flushed faces as they nodded heavily after hearing Xiao Yan’s cry!

“Alright. everyone can disperse for today. Gather here tomorrow. We

will collectively enter the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower!'" Xiao Yan waved his hand. He immediately turned his body and walked toward the small pavilion home. Just as he was about to enter the door, his footsteps suddenly paused as he whispered to Xun Er beside him, "That's right, call Atai over here. I have some questions to ask him."

"Yes." Xun Er nodded slightly, turned her body and left.

.....

"How much do you know about the 'White Gang?'"

Xiao Yan, Xun Er, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia were all seated on chairs in the hall. Atai was also seated on a seat toward the left side. Xiao Yan's question was obviously directed at him.

"The leader of the 'White Gang' is called Bai Cheng, the older cousin of Bai Shan. He is very strong with a strength around that of a six star Dou Ling. It is said that he is also an expert on the 'Strong Ranking.' He is also considered to be a person with a prominent reputation within the Inner Academy." Atai thought for a moment before he spoke slowly.

"A six star Dou Ling? An expert on the 'Strong Ranking'? What is his rank?" Xiao Yan frowned slightly as his finger gently tapped on the surface of the table. He had already displayed the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' when he fought with Fu Ao, this three star Dou Ling. Moreover, he had relied on the advantage of the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' in order to luckily defeat the latter. If he were to meet a six star Dou Ling, there would be a gap of a whole class. His chances of victory... unless he used the 'Flame Splitting Tsunami' or... a large scale 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame,' his chances of victory would basically be nil.

"Thirty four."

Atai replied honestly. His understanding of the Inner Academy somewhat exceeded Xiao Yan's expectations.

"A six star Dou Ling is only ranked thirty four... this 'Strong Ranking' of the Inner Academy does indeed have quite a lot of golden content." Xun Er held a warm teacup as she spoke with a smile touching the corner of her

mouth.

“Yes. It is indeed very challenging.” Wu Hao nodded with a smile. A wild and heated fighting spirit filled his face.

Xiao Yan crossed his ten fingers, leaned his body on the back of the chair, and sighed, “What about the other members of the ‘White Gang?’ What is their strength like?”

“Other than Bai Cheng, the ‘White Gang’ has three more elite Dou Ling. One of them is Fu Ao whom you fought with today. The fighting strength of the other two is perhaps a little stronger than Fu Ao, but their levels are all around that of three star Dou Lings.” Atai sighed, “There are in total thirty-four other members. Thirteen of them are strong Da Dou Shi. The remaining are mostly around the peak Dou Shi class. If they gain the opportunity, they may directly advance to the Da Dou Shi class.”

“Four Dou Ling, thirteen Da Dou Shi and the rest are at the peak of the Dou Shi class...” Xiao Yan sighed and muttered, “This ‘White Gang’ is indeed quite strong... troublesome.”

“They are indeed quite strong. This ‘White Gang’ may not be considered a top notch faction within the Inner Academy, but there are not many people who would openly provoke them.” Atai laughed bitterly, “If it was in the past, a faction of the level that the ‘White Gang’ is in would usually not find trouble with a new student faction. This time around, it is likely due to Bai Shan that they came and find us.”

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. Bai Shan and him had long since been in conflict. Now that the former had entered the Inner Academy and had strength that he could borrow, it was natural that he would come and find trouble with Xiao Yan. Putting it this way, ‘Pan’s Gate’ can be considered to have been implicated by him.

“Do everything like I have said earlier. From tomorrow on, the members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ will enter the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to train. We need to raise our strength in the shortest amount of time.” Xiao Yan mused for a moment before raising his head and asking, “Everyone has sufficient ‘Fire Energy’ in their hands, no?”

“Ke ke, thanks to Chief, the ‘Fire Energy’ which we had obtained from the Hunting Competition is sufficient for us to train for one month in the tower.” Atai smiled and nodded his head.

“Yes, that’s good...” Xiao Yan nodded and let out a gentle breath of air. He softly muttered, “Hopefully, there will not be any other unexpected troubles occurring. The current ‘Pan’s Gate’ is really too weak. It really is troublesome for us to establish a foothold in this Inner Academy.”

Chapter 472: Meeting

The atmosphere of the well lit room contained a faint scent of gunpowder. There were over ten people standing around or sitting within this room. At this moment, there was some anger on the faces of these people.

“Boss, that ‘Pan’s Gate’ really doesn’t know what is good for them. They actually dared to beat up Fu Ao until he is in such a state. If we do not get back at them, how will our ‘White Gang’ survive in the Inner Academy in the future?” A man in the room suddenly could not control himself as he slammed his palm on the table, and cried out furiously.

“That’s right, Boss, we cannot let Big Brother Fu Ao just suffer this beating.” The voice of that man had just sounded when the remaining people in the room went along with it and demanded uniformly.

A man was leaning on the back of his chair as he was seated on the leader’s seat in the room and his palm fondled his chin. Looking at his appearance, there was a faint similarity between him and Bai Shan. It appeared that he should be the leader of the ‘White Gang,’ Bai Shan’s older cousin and that strong person who was ranked thirty-fourth on the ‘Strong Ranking,’ Bai Cheng.

Bai Cheng ignored the people in the room who were rousing to action as a group. His gaze stopped on a human figure on his left side. At this moment, half of the face of this human figure was wrapped in gauze. From the half side of the face that was exposed, one could vaguely identify this person. He was Fu Ao, who had fainted on the spot after Xiao Yan ruthlessly swung a punch at his face today.

“Fu Ao, how are your injuries?” Seeing this miserable manner of Fu Ao, the man involuntarily frowned as he opened his mouth and asked.

As he opened his mouth, the noisiness in the room immediately became quiet. Everyone’s gaze paused on Fu Ao’s body.

“I did not suffer any overly serious internal injuries. However, I will need to rest for four to five days in order to be able to fully recover.” A

somewhat changed voice of Fu Ao was being emitted from the mouth belonging to Fu Ao, who had half of his face wrapped up.

“What is the strength of that Xiao Yan like?” Bai Cheng nodded slightly and narrowed his eyes. That calm voice of his contained a thread of dark coldness.

“His own strength is merely around that of a five or six star Da Dou Shi. However, he seems to be able to use a kind of Secret Technique in order to forcefully increase his own strength, raising it to the Dou Ling class. Additionally, the flame which he uses is also extremely domineering and powerful. The combination of a Dou Technique and an item agglomerated from Dou Qi attack which I had displayed were all neutralized by that domineering flame.” A dissatisfaction flashed across Fu Ao’s eyes. The anger in his voice also became richer, “Originally, I would not have lost so miserably, but who would expect that the fellow actually knows a sonic Dou Technique. He took advantage of me when I could not defend, shaking me until I became absent-minded, and launched a heavy blow to beat me up until this manner.”

Bai Cheng nodded slightly. He turned his heads to one side. The cold-faced Bai Shan was seated there. The latter nodded when he saw Bai Cheng looking over and said faintly, “Older Cousin, the details are roughly the same as what Big Brother Fu Ao had said. That Xiao Yan does indeed possess these skills. In addition, he also knows an even stronger Dou Skill. That is the mysterious flame that he used to attack Luo Hou with back then. For some unknown reason, he did not use it today.”

“I have also heard of that fire lotus Dou Technique. It is indeed very strong but it seems to be very exhausting. With Xiao Yan’s strength, he may perhaps be only able to display it once or twice in his peak condition.” Bai Cheng nodded and replied.

“Boss. This time around, I was at a disadvantage because I didn’t know the details. If we were to fight him next time, I would definitely not lose!” Fu Ao said with extreme dissatisfaction.

“Do you still think that you have not embarrassed yourself enough?” Bai

Cheng's face sunk. His palm abruptly slammed on the table. His clear voice shocked everyone in the room until they did not dare interrupt.

"If you had not given that so called promise before fighting today, I would bring people to crush the 'Pan's Gate' and get them to disband immediately. However, you, a fool who thinks highly of yourself, actually dared to make such a promise after clearly knowing that Xiao Yan had defeated Luo Hou. Now that the agreement has been spread throughout the Inner Academy, won't we end up being bad-mouthed if we go and find trouble with 'Pan's Gate' now? There are quite a number of people in this Inner Academy who are waiting to see us, the 'White Gang,' embarrass ourselves."

"Then what do we do? We cannot just simply let this pass so easily, no? If we were to act like nothing happened, it would not be beneficial to the reputation of our 'White Gang.'" Fu Ao could only soften his voice because of the reprimand by Bai Cheng as he replied indignantly.

Bai Cheng lifted the teacup beside him and took a shallow sip. He lifted his head and was quiet for a while before slowly speaking, "You have already promised not to find trouble with 'Pan's Gate' for half a year. Therefore, for a brief period of time, the members of the 'White Gang' should try to avoid having conflicts with them..."

"Older Cousin, you are thinking of leaving Xiao Yan's group alone for half a year?" Bai Shan could not help but ask with a frown after he heard this.

Bai Cheng held the teacup tightly, and mused a little before nodding. He said faintly, "They won't be able to become much stronger in half a year. At that time, I will personally issue a challenge to 'Pan's Gate.'"

"Isn't this a little too risky? Who would know what kind of unexpected changes would happen in half a year's time? That Xiao Yan is not someone that can be handled with common sense." Bai Shan said in a deep voice.

"Relax. Even if they were to spend every single day of this half a year training in the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' they would at the very

most reach the peak of the Da Dou Shi class. It is not so easy to advance into the Dou Ling class. Moreover, I am also not a fool like Fu Ao. Even if I have absolute confidence in winning, I will not promise a one on one. At that time everyone from the 'White Gang' will move together. I want to see if their 'Pan's Gate' can still struggle to stand." Bai Cheng waved his hand and said.

"This..." Bai Shan still hesitated a little when he heard this. During the period of time when he was living alongside Xiao Yan in the forest, he had seen Xiao Yan create quite a lot of miracles that caused people to be endlessly shocked. Hence, he continued to have an uncertain feeling in his heart.

"This is only the initial plan. We will decide based on the situation at that time. Get someone to observe every single action of this 'Pan's Gate'..." Seeing that Bai Shan was still slightly perturbed, Bai Cheng could only helplessly shake his head and change his words.

"Alright, it is already quite late. Everyone should dispense. Tomorrow, I will enter the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to train. It will perhaps be five to six days before I will come out. During this period of time, you, Fu Ao and the other two will look after the matters within the gang." Bai Cheng stood up and commanded faintly.

"Yes."

.....

In the morning of the next day, when the sky had just brightened, the lights in the new students' residence area were brightly lit. Numerous human figures came rushing out from their rooms before they finally lined up orderly in front of the small pavilion home of Xiao Yan's four-man group.

"Creak..."

A long while later, the door of the small pavilion home was slowly pushed open. Xiao Yan's four-man group slowly walked out. They stood in front of the door and eyed those high-spirited members of the 'Pan's Gate,' whose faces were filled with excitement, smiling involuntarily. Although

these members were currently still quite weak, their potential was quite great. As long as they were given sufficient time, Xiao Yan believed that they would sooner or later become true strong people.

“Let’s go.”

Since the members were all gathered, Xiao Yan did not say any other unnecessary words. He waved his hands, and took the lead along with Wu Hao, Xun Er, and Hu Jia as they swiftly walked toward the exit. The over forty new students followed close behind.

On the road that led to the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,’ the students coming and going eyed that large group of people who passed by them with a ‘Hu La’ sound. They could not help but be a little stunned. When some of those with sharp-eyes saw Xiao Yan and the large Heavy Xuan Ruler he was carrying on his back, surprised voices immediately sounded.

“Huh? Isn’t that Xiao Yan?”

“Ha, he appears quite handsome...”

“The two girls that are following by his side also appear to be very beautiful. Hee hee, I wonder who will be lucky enough to get on intimate terms with them...”

“These people should be the new student faction ‘Pan’s Gate’ which has caused an uproar in the Inner Academy recently, right? It seems that their aura is quite good.”

“I heard that even Fu Ao from the ‘White Gang’ was beaten by Xiao Yan yesterday. Looks like this fellow does indeed have some strength.”

“.....”

Xiao Yan let out a gentle breath as he heard the various private conversations as they passed by. Now their ‘Pan’s Gate’ could be considered to be famous in the Inner Academy. However, their current strength and reputation did not appear to match.

Xiao Yan shook his head and ignored the discussions the people around were having over him and ‘Pan’s Gate.’ He let out a urging sound and the

speed of the group increased. After which, they carried a slip of dust as they swiftly disappeared at the end of the road...

After walking for nearly an hour, the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' that merely exposed its peak, finally appeared in their sights. When the people from 'Pan's Gate' saw that extremely mysterious tower, surprised sounds involuntarily appeared one after another.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, is this the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower?' It is indeed very unique to be actually buried underground." Xun Er eyed that extremely large tower, and let out a sweet soft laugh in a lovely manner, attracting quite a number of surprised gazes from the men who were waiting at this place.

"Yes."

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. He led everyone to occupy a spot which was not too near the front. According to the rules of the Inner Academy, this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' had a strict opening and closing time. Hence, Xiao Yan's group could only patiently wait for the door of the tower to be opened.

As time slowly flowed passed, the human flow around them also became increasingly large. The noisy sounds as well as the human flow that gathered caused everyone in 'Pan's Gate' to be shocked. It was unexpected that the Inner Academy possessed such a number of people despite the extremely harsh condition to enter it.

The spot where Xiao Yan's group was, was undoubtedly the place which attracted the most attention. During these few days, Xiao Yan and the matter of 'Pan's Gate' being formed had already become the focus of attention of the entire Inner Academy during this period of time. Moreover, the matter of Xiao Yan defeating Fu Ao and causing the 'White Gang' to fall back had further intensified the spreading of this reputation.

Xiao Yan's group was seated cross-legged as they ignored the noisy voices and various looks they received around them.

Time continued to flow past like the sand between fingers. Over twenty minutes since Xiao Yan had arrived, there was suddenly a group of people

who had squeezed out from within the crowd. After which, they slowly walked toward the spot where Xiao Yan's group was at.

As this group of people walked forward, the gazes around gathered onto them. After seeing the leader of this group, their gazes turned toward the place where Xiao Yan's group was at. Their eyes carried some delight from watching the fun.

The atmosphere which had suddenly become strange caused Xiao Yan to open his eyes. He raised his head, and threw his gaze toward the group of people that walked over, and could not help but frown slightly.

"Chief, be careful. That fellow is the leader of the 'White Gang,' Bai Cheng!" Atai, who was beside Xiao Yan, wore a solemn expression as he softly informed him.

"Yes."

Xiao Yan nodded his head slightly. He waved his hand and the dozens of 'Pan's Gate' members who were seated cross-legged on the ground let out a 'swish' sound as they stood up in union. Numerous gazes stared intently at Bai Cheng's group which was slowly walking over.

In an instant, the atmosphere outside the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' had turned somewhat tense.

Chapter 473: Hidden Confrontation

Under everyone's gazes, Bai Cheng's group slowly walked up to Xiao Yan. The former's gaze swept over the new students who had quite a strong aura before finally stopping on the faces of Xiao Yan's four-man group.

Xiao Yan's eyes were locked onto this man in front of him, whose appearance was somewhat similar to Bai Shan. Despite the powerful aura that was emitted from the body of this person, Xiao Yan felt no fear in his heart. His pair of eyes were calm without any ripples.

Seeing these groups staring at one another, the surrounding crowd could not help but become much quieter. The gazes which they used to look at the groups were filled with all sorts of emotions.

"You are Xiao Yan, right? I have frequently heard Bai Shan mentioning you. Now that I see you today, your bearing is indeed extraordinary." After exchanging looks with Xiao Yan for a moment, the somewhat dark and solemn face Bai Cheng suddenly laughed. He actually extended his hand toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and observed Bai Cheng's actions. The darkness contained within the other party's eyes was also captured by his eyes. He laughed softly and extended his hand in full view of everyone before holding Bai Cheng's hand.

The moment the hands held one another, the smile on Bai Cheng's face suddenly withdrew. A powerful aura erupted from within his body, shaking the surrounding crowd until their clothes flapped. Some of those who were weaker could not keep their bodies still as they took a step back. The hand which Bai Cheng used to hold Xiao Yan's was also instantly covered by this dense Dou Qi.

Xiao Yan's expression sunk as he sensed the surge in strength and the pain coming from his hand. Dou Qi in his body circulated and a wisp of green-colored flame was drawn out. Finally, it moved through the vein and was swiftly channeled to his palm.

However, the instant the flame was about to leave his body, Bai Cheng appeared to have sensed something. A cold smile was lifted from the corner of his mouth. His middle finger was bent slightly and immediately formed an extremely small arc that heavily pressed on Xiao Yan's palm.

The hidden force that was being transmitted from his palm caused Xiao Yan's hand to tremble. However, his face was still extremely calm as he stared intently at Bai Cheng opposite of him.

Bai Chang's single blow struck his opponent and Bai Cheng took advantage of that instant, when Xiao Yan's hand was numb, to withdraw his palm in a lightning-like manner.

Xiao Yan's eyes were icy-cold as he eyed Bai Cheng who wanted to withdraw after taking advantage. He flicked his finger and a wisp of green-colored flame shot out from his finger and swiftly caught up to Bai Shan's hand which was being withdrawn.

Seeing the hot fire seedling that was swiftly flying over. Bai Shan's eyes narrowed slightly. Dou Qi abruptly swarmed out from his palm before finally forming a half a foot Dou Qi barrier that wrapped the flame seedling within before swiftly pulling back his hand.

"Explode!"

Xiao Yan's mouth moved slightly as a deep soft voice was emitted from his mouth.

"Bang!"

As the Xiao Yan's voice sounded, the green-colored flame seedling which was wrapped by the Dou Qi light barrier suddenly trembled. It abruptly burst open with a muffled explosion. A flame undulation that was not weak smashed heavily against the Dou Qi barrier, blasting it until it was like the surface of a lake after a rock had been thrown into it. This lasted for a moment before the Dou Qi light barrier, which had been hastily constructed by Bai Cheng, was finally overwhelmed. It broke cleanly apart.

Although the explosion of the flame broke apart the Dou Qi light barrier, it merely turned into a fire wave that spread out before it slowly

disappeared due to its energy being completely exhausted.

“Bai Cheng, what are you doing?”

This confrontation between the both of them was obscure and swift. Everyone reacted to it only after the fire wave had disappeared. Only then did they understand that in an instant, the two of them had actually secretly exchanged blows. The pretty face of the fiery tempered Hu Jia immediately sank as she took the lead to shout out loud.

After Hu Jia's cry, Wu Hao, and the other forty plus members of the 'Pan's Gate' also took a step forward in union while wearing furious faces. They appeared to show that they had the intention to fight should there be even a little argument.

“Ke ke, why are you so anxious? I am only exchanging pointers with Junior Xiao Yan. What is there to feel strange about with matters like this in the Inner Academy?” Bai Cheng patted his sleeves and replied with a faint smile. “I will give you an advice. Since you have arrived at the Inner Academy, it would be best to do things according to the rules of the Inner Academy. Otherwise, you will only be seeking humiliation at the end of it all.”

When Bai Cheng spoke, his eyes continued to stare at Xiao Yan. His meaning was naturally understood without needing to give voice to it. In the confrontation earlier, Xiao Yan did not cause any damage to him, but he had firmly given Xiao Yan a punch with his finger. Of course, there was an ambush factor to it, but he had still gained the upperhand. Hence, he could not help but have some obscure pride and laughter when he spoke.

Xiao Yan was expressionless as he waved his hand at Wu Hao and the others, indicating for them not to be impulsive. His other hand was withdrawn into his sleeve. The instant it entered his sleeve, his hand involuntarily trembled a couple of times. That finger punch of Bai Cheng earlier was not weak. If it were not for him taking precautions, it was likely that this hand would not be able to move for quite a number of days.

He had been in the presence of Bai Cheng for only a couple of minutes but by studying this brief attack and the latter's schemingness, this person

was even more sinister than Bai Shan. It was clear that he had the advantage in strength yet he still used this underhanded sneak attack method. This action may cause people to despise him, but it must be said that it was very effective.

A thought flashed across Xiao Yan's heart. He lifted his head slowly and eyed Bai Shan on the opposite side. A moment later, a faint smile suddenly appeared on his calm face as he softly said, "Senior Bai Shan is indeed worthy of being an expert on the 'Strong Ranking.' In terms of this finger punch today, Xiao Yan is less competent. I shall remember this in my heart and hopefully, Senior will retrieve it in the future."

Bai Shan could not help but knit his eyebrows together as he stared at the faint smile on Xiao Yan's face. The degree in which the other party suppressed his emotion had really exceeded his expectation. The obscure gloating expression in his eyes slowly disappeared as he said in a deep voice, "As long as you have the ability, I, Bai Shan will wait for you any time. You set up Fu Ao and caused my 'White Gang' to be unable to touch your 'Pan's Gate' for half a year. This can also be considered a little ability of yours. However, I will let you disband 'Pan's Gate' by yourself half a year later!"

"I will still say the same thing. The Inner Academy uses the Inner Academy's own rules. No matter what your status is outside or what your potential is like, you can only lie on the ground before you have strength. However, you still dare to be this arrogant despite not having strength. You are undoubtedly seeking to humiliate yourself." Bai Cheng laughed coldly.

Seeing Xiao Yan being willfully reprimanded in public by Bai Cheng, there was a faint golden-colored flame that flashed over the intelligent eyes of Xun Er by the side. There was a rare killing intent present within the flame.

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes. Some coldness flashed across his dark black pupils. He suddenly extended his right hand and pressed down Wu Hao by the side. The latter's face was dark and solemn while his blood-colored Dou Qi had shrouded his body. He muttered in a soft voice, "Don't be

impulsive... we will settle the score in the future.”

Wu Hao hesitated as he was pressed down by Xiao Yan. The former could only nod his head and withdraw. He clearly understood that with their current strength, it was still very difficult to fight with Bai Cheng, who was a strong six star Dou Ling.

Bai Cheng gave a cold proud laugh when he listened to Xiao Yan's group not say anything.

“For other people, it is seeking humiliation just because they have no ability to be arrogant. Is this also the case if you, Bai Cheng, don't have the ability?” Just as Bai Cheng was prepared to swagger away, a clear voice was suddenly transmitted from the crowd. The voice was not unfamiliar, Bai Cheng's face changed slightly as he coldly said, “Han Yue! Why are you being a busy-body?”

The human crowd suddenly parted and formed a small path. Immediately, seven or eight graceful figures walked slowly forward. Waves of fragrance caused the observers around to brace their spirits. The person leading the group was Han Yue, who had met Xiao Yan once before.

The few people behind Han Yue were all similar women. All of them wore a crescent shape badge. Clearly, they belonged to the same faction. The appearance of these females may be inferior to Han Yue, but with so many of them gathered together they still attracted many eyes. In this Inner Academy where the males occupied three quarters of the entire population, females, especially beautiful females, were undoubtedly extremely welcomed.

The moment Han Yue's group revealed themselves, the gazes of those around immediately became much more heated. Private conversations occurred continuously.

“I merely cannot accept watching you bully a group of new students by using your status. If you have the ability, why don't you go and act imposing in front of Lin Xiu Ya or Yan Hao?” Han Yue's face was still cold and indifferent, much like a glacier. With the combination of her silver hair that gathered about her waist and her silver-colored dress, only Xun

Er and Hu Jia among all the ladies present could compete with her elegant demeanor.

“You...”

Bai Cheng’s face faintly revealed his anger. The corner of his mouth twitched slightly. Lin Xiu Ya and Yan Hao were experts ranked in the top ten of the ‘Strong Ranking,’ their strength was at the peak of the Dou Ling class. The factions under them were also the top five within the Inner Academy. How would he dare to act arrogantly in front of them?

Although he had some anger in his heart, he did not dare to be too presumptuous toward Han Yue. The other party was not weaker than him regardless of whether it was her strength or her faction. Hence, he could only stare at Xiao Yan with a dark expression as he replied in a somewhat mocking manner, “If what Bai Shan said is true, your affinity with women is really something that people envy...”

“Half a year later, I want to see just what excuses you find.” Bai Cheng waved his hand and laughed coldly. He led his people as they walked toward the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’

“Half a year later, the ‘White Gang’ will disband...” Xiao Yan slowly inhaled a breath of air and whispered just as Bai Cheng passed by Xiao Yan’s shoulders.

Bai Cheng’s footsteps paused. His eyes carried some ridicule and a teasing manner as he eyed Xiao Yan and said, “I will wait for you. It would be best that you do not hide behind a woman’s back at that time.” Once he said that, he led his people and left this place.

Seeing Bai Cheng’s group leaving, those people around who were waiting to see some fun could not help but shake their heads in disappointment.

Han Yue slowly walked toward Xiao Yan. When she saw his face, which remained calm after being taunted, she sighed softly and said, “I have told you yesterday that it would be best if you try to keep a low profile before you become strong. In the end, you have already attracted trouble today.”

“I am not to be blamed for this. Other people have come to find us... I cannot simply do nothing about it.” Xiao Yan smiled and shrugged his shoulders. Immediately, he cupped his hands toward Han Yue and said, “Senior Han Yue, thank you for speaking out for the ‘Pan’s Gate’ today. If there is anything that you need help with in the future, I, Xiao Yan will definitely do all I can to help.”

“This kind of thing... we can talk about this in the future. The current you cannot help me with anything.” Han Yue shook her head. Her straightforward words caused Xiao Yan to smile helplessly.

“Open the Tower!”

Just as Xiao Yan introduced Xun Er and the two others to Han Yue, an old voice suddenly sounded mightily over the entire crowded area. Immediately, all the noise ceased. The creaking sound of the tower door being opened slowly reverberated...

Chapter 474: Middle Grade Training Room

As they eyed the door of the tower being opened, the crowd immediately became noisy. Xiao Yan could only cease his introduction, and raised his hands at Han Yue. After which, he looked at the increasingly wide gap of the door.

When the door was opened, the human crowd outside the tower door suddenly swarmed in, much like a flood.

Xiao Yan borrowed the advantage of a large group of people as he squeezed into the crowd and rushed into the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.'

After entering the tower Han Yue brought those few ladies that were with her and parted ways with Xiao Yan since their paths were different. Before she left, she reminded Xiao Yan to pay more attention to every action of the 'White Gang.'

Xiao Yan naturally accepted Han Yue's good intention in his heart. After watching their backs until they disappeared from his sight, he turned to the members of 'Pan's Gate.' Before entering the tower earlier, he had told them that they needed to be careful of their first grilling by the 'Heart Flame.' Moreover, he also told them the secret of how to correctly resolve the Heart Flame. Therefore, there was no excessively strange phenomena occurring other than the bodies of the new students becoming stiff as their eyes tightly shut and their faces became flushed.

After waiting for nearly two minutes, Xun Er was the first to open her eyes. There was a faint glow which covered her entire face. Clearly, she had gained quite a lot after the Dou Qi was refined by that cluster of Heart Flame.

Xiao Yan was also a little surprised at Xun Er being able to wake up this quickly. As she had already known how to resolve the Heart Flame, the test of being grilled by the Heart Flame for the first time had naturally lost

its verification purpose. Hence, that standard of one being more outstanding the longer one endured was also useless. Instead, currently, it was to see who was the one who could exhaust all of the strength of the wisp of Heart Flame and achieve the effect of strengthening their Dou Qi. It was this reason that caused Xiao Yan to feel shocked at Xun Er's speed.

Behind Xun Er was unsurprisingly Hu Jia. After her, the members of the 'Pan's Gate' began to wake up one after another.

Although the time they woke up was not uniform, it was clear from their glowing expressions that they had reaped quite a lot of benefits from the grilling of a wisp of Heart Flame. It appeared that the 'Fallen Heart Flame' did indeed grant enormous help when training.

"This 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' is indeed a little fantastic. No wonder those older students improve so quickly. This Inner Academy actually relies on it..." A surprised expression was on Xun Er's face. However, on top of being amazed, there seemed to be some other feeling that other people would have difficulty sensing.

"Training in the tower does indeed have the effect of gaining twice the effect with only half the effort." Hu Jia at the side also nodded joyfully. She said, "By training in the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' I will definitely be able to advance to the Dou Ling class in less than a year!"

The other members of 'Pan's Gate' also echoed with joyful faces. That anxious manner of theirs really appeared like they wanted to immediately find a place to sit down and train.

"This should be student Xiao Yan, right?"

Just as Xiao Yan was prepared to bring everyone to search for a training room, a middle-aged man suddenly and swiftly walked toward them. He smiled and asked a question toward Xiao Yan.

"This student is indeed Xiao Yan. Does instructor have something to discuss?" When Xiao Yan saw the special badge on this middle-aged man that only the instructors of the Inner Academy could wear, he immediately replied courteously.

“I was instructed by Elder Liu to lead you all to that ‘Middle Grade Training Room’...” The middle-aged man spoke softly with a smile.

Xiao Yan’s eyes brightened when he heard this. Only then did he recall that special ‘Middle Grade Training Room’ that Elder Liu had mentioned yesterday. He hurriedly cupped his hands together and said, “In that case, thank you very much for leading the way, instructor.”

“Ke ke, it’s fine. Follow me.” The middle-aged man smiled and shook his head. His gaze randomly swept over Xiao Yan’s body. A moment later, he nodded slightly, turned around and led the way at the front.

“Follow him.” Xiao Yan waved toward everyone behind and hurriedly followed the middle-aged instructor in front.

The group of people followed behind this middle-aged man as they walked toward the area where the middle grade training rooms were inside the tower. After a few minutes of the tortuous route, everyone paused outside a somewhat old training room.

As they saw this training room which appeared somewhat old and broken compared to other places, Xiao Yan’s group could not help but be speechless. Seeing their expression, the middle-aged instructor knew what they were thinking, and laughed involuntarily as he pushed the door and entered.

Xiao Yan stood at the door, hesitated for a moment before leading the way in.

As they walked into the room, a faint cold air moved along their feet and climbed up from the spot where their feet touched the ground, causing the bodies of Xiao Yan’s group to have a cool feeling.

The faint warm light within the room was not too eye-piercing. Neither did it cause them to feel the room was dark. The size of the room was quite large with more than enough space to hold forty people. There was a large spacious platform in the middle which was piled from various pieces of dark black rocks. The platform was around two inches higher than the ground.

“Xiao Yan, the black rock area in the middle is the training area.”

The middle-aged man smiled, and walked toward the edge of the black rock platform. He lowered his body and pointed at some cable ties which were distinctly divided and smiled as he said, “Each person will have sufficient training space. This place has a notch which protrudes out. As long as all of you place your own Fire Crystal Card into respective ones and activate your Qi Technique, there will be an unceasing amount of Heart Flames appearing in your body. After which, all of you can use it to refine your Dou Qi, toughen your Qi Paths and bones, and raise your strengths.”

Hearing this, Xiao Yan’s group hurriedly went forward and surrounded the place out of curiosity. They did indeed see that there were individual training area being drawn out on the black platform with an unknown dye. Moreover, there was a rock platform socket that was an inch higher in this training area.

“This is the first day that you have entered the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to train. Hence, I need to tell you all about the rules you must take note of.” The middle-aged man straightened his body, mused for awhile before continuing, “Although the refinement using the Heart Flame can cause your training speed to soar greatly, you cannot forget about your meals nor sleep and simply just train here. This is because the Heart Flame contains the violent and wild strength of a fire. When it refines the debris within the Dou Qi, it also appends some wild and violent forces of a flame into it...”

“The wild and violent forces of this kind of flame cannot be resolved by Dou Qi. Instead, one must use time to wear them off. Hence, with your current strength and your resistance to the Heart Flame, it would be best if you train for half a day then rest for some nights. Training and resting in this manner is the best...”

“After you all have trained for a long time here, you can increase your training time appropriately. If you advance to the Dou Ling class, you can train for four to five days in one go within the tower without leaving. However, now... you all must take it one step at a time and follow the

stipulated resting and training time. Otherwise, you will only damage yourself. This kind of thing is something that we, in the Inner Academy, don't wish to see." The middle-aged instructor reminded gravely.

Xiao Yan's group nodded their heads when they heard the middle-aged instructor's reminder.

The middle-aged instructor smiled when he saw this. He waved his hand and said, "Since you already understand this, then all of you should make the most of your time and train. The effects of your first time entering a training room to train will be extremely notable. Many new students with outstanding training talent advanced a level in their first training. Hopefully, all of you are able to do so too."

Once he said that, he swung his sleeves, turned around and walked out of the door.

Xiao Yan mused slightly as he eyed the middle-aged instructor leaving. After which, he walked swiftly and followed him. When he sent the latter out of the door, he suddenly whispered, "Instructor, please wait."

The middle-aged instructor could not help but be stunned when he heard Xiao Yan's words. While he was still slightly stunned, Xiao Yan swiftly stuffed a small jade bottle into his hand and spoke with a smile, "We have troubled instructor today. This is a bottle containing medicinal pills that are able to let one calm down and train. It is not considered to be very valuable..."

The middle-aged instructor was about to return the item Xiao Yan had suddenly stuffed into his hands when he heard it was a medicinal pill that would enable one to calm down and train. A joy flashed across his eyes. He hesitated for a moment before he smiled stored the jade bottle away as he looked left and right. In a soft voice, he said, "Little fellow, rest assured. Coincidentally, I am in charge of this area. Hence, hee hee, you can be at ease and train."

"Ke ke, instructor, thank you very much." Xiao Yan smiled and nodded.

"If you do not dislike it, you can call me old brother Hou Hu in the future." That middle-aged instructor laughed and replied.

“In that case, the little me will do as you say even though I don’t deserve it.” Xiao Yan responded and smiled.

“Ah, good. Go in and train. Don’t waste time.” Hou Hu continued to smile and spoke while he waved his hand.

Xiao Yan nodded, turned around and shut the door.

Seeing the room door which was shut, Hou Hu could not resist shaking his head and whispering, “This little fellow really knows how to conduct himself. Not bad, not bad, I like him...”

.....

“Tsk tsk, this kind of strange training method is really unheard of.”

Xiao Yan had just entered the room when he heard Hu Jia’s voice. He followed the voice and looked over, only to see that she was repeatedly stroking the black-colored stone platform.

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. He walked forward and his hand carefully touched the black platform. A faint warmth moved along his finger and was transmitted over. Under this strange warmth, it appeared that the speed in which the Dou Qi was circulating in his body had become much more dynamic.

“It is indeed a little intriguing. Ke ke, everyone, find a place to sit. Let’s see how many people among us can advance to a higher level in our first training!” Xiao Yan drew the large Heavy Xuan Ruler from his back. He flicked his hand and returned it to his storage ring. His body leaped and he took the lead in finding a place that was a little to the left of the room.

Seeing Xiao Yan taking the lead, all the members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ did as they were ordered. Their bodies flashed and each of them found a training spot.

Xiao Yan crossed his legs and sat on the rock platform properly. He sensed the warmth which was becoming increasingly rich. After which, he let out a long breath and flicked his finger. A green-colored Fire Crystal Card appeared in his palm.

He held the green Fire Crystal Card tightly with both hands. After which, he carefully inserted it slowly into the notch on the ground. He heard a slight creaking sound as a faint light shot out from within the notch. Following the appearance of this light, Xiao Yan could clearly see that the number, one hundred forty-eight, on his green Fire Crystal Card reduce by one. Clearly, this should be the deduction of one day's worth of training fee, which was also one 'Fire Energy'.

Not long after the 'Fire Energy' was deducted, Xiao Yan slowly shut his eyes. His hands formed the training seals and his body appeared to be like an old monk in meditation, not making even the slightest movement.

Soon after Xiao Yan did this, Xun Er and the rest also inserted their Fire Crystal Cards into the notch. In an instant, a slight creaking sound was repeatedly sounded within the room. Faint glows were lit at the same time and basically covered the light in the room.

The glow gradually dimmed and the room, which originally had some private conversations, slowly became quiet. Only the sound of steady and strong breathing slowly reverberated throughout the room.

Chapter 475: Refinement

There was only the long lasting and calm sound of heartbeats slowly reverberating within his quiet and lonely space. After entering the training condition, Xiao Yan's ability to sense the surrounding natural energy became even sharper. He could feel the hot energy within this training room, which was so rich that it left one speechless. When training in this kind of place, people who practiced a fire affinity Qi Method would undoubtedly obtain an even more notable effect compared to the others.

“Pu...”

Xiao Yan's spirit became even more quiet. Suddenly, a low and slight sound appeared. Immediately, a cluster of seemingly invisible fire seedling that contained a strange undulation appeared at a spot not far away from Xiao Yan's heart without any forewarning. Threads of warmth were being emitted, grilling the interior of Xiao Yan's body until it was steaming hot.

Xiao Yan mind focused on that wisp of invisible flame. He once again felt a fear due to the elusiveness of the 'Fallen Heart Flame.' Even though he was currently in an extremely prepared condition, he still did not sense just how this wisp of flame had appeared...

Xiao Yan sighed quietly in his heart. He stared intently at this wisp of flame seedling. The current cluster undoubtedly appeared a little stronger than the one that Xiao Yan had met yesterday. It was likely due to this being a Middle Grade Training Room.

Following the appearance of this cluster of 'Fallen Heart Flame,' the kind of burning feeling in his Qi Paths he felt yesterday began to appear once again. However, Xiao Yan did not use the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' to isolate it like he did before. After understanding the training method here, he already understood that letting the Qi Paths, bones, muscles, and even the cells slowly persist and evolve under this burning pain was a very important link in training within this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.' Hence, if he were to isolate it, the benefits he would gain would become increasingly small. In that way, he would lose more than he gained.

Xiao Yan clenched his teeth and endured the pain. That wisp of invisible flame seedling soared even more happily. The high temperature which curled upward seeped out and seemed to have formed an oven in his body. All the organs and even the Qi Paths in a person's body were being refined within this oven. Moreover, they were repeatedly becoming stronger under this refinement!

The burning pain that was created from the high temperature caused the Qi Paths in Xiao Yan's body to occasionally twitch extremely slightly. However, it was fortunate that such pain was not impossible to endure. After withstanding it in this manner for ten minutes, Xiao Yan's mind moved. A faint glow was suddenly emitted from that rhombus shaped Dou Crystal in the middle of the vortex. Immediately, waves of powerful Dou Qi began to unceasingly swarm out from it like a floodgate that had been discharged.

Dou Qi swiftly circulated in his Qi Paths and it finally arrived by the wisp of the Fallen Heart Flame's split body under the direction of Xiao Yan's mind. As his mind moved, the Dou Qi that had been waiting at that spot immediately rushed over. Green-colored Dou Qi directly poured into that invisible flame!

At that instant, when the Dou Qi entered the invisible flame, Xiao Yan could clearly feel that the latter had suddenly become much hotter instantaneously. The Dou Qi that had entered the flame was like boiling water that was bubbling. There was something that was repeatedly being expelled within that high temperature and stripped off...

This kind of bubbling did not last for very long before that thread of Dou Qi successfully came out of the flame. After the Dou Qi exited the flame, its size was around half as much compared to when it had entered. However, the power and compactness of the energy that was contained within far exceeded what its earlier form could compare with. Clearly after being refined by the invisible flame, this thread of Dou Qi had successfully undergone a slimming process.

After the first thread of Dou Qi had successfully exited the flame, it was directed by Xiao Yan's mind and once again moved along his Qi Paths. It

circulated one full cycle before being poured into the Dou Crystal. Immediately, the glow on the surface of the Dou Crystal once again soared a little.

Joy immediately flowed into Xiao Yan's heart when he saw this change of the Dou Crystal. This 'Fallen Heart Flame' was indeed worthy of being a training accelerator. This effect would directly cause anyone to view it with envy. If this matter were to spread, it was likely that the Jia Nan Academy would not be able to escape having people covet it even with its position in the continent.

Following the first successful refinement, Xiao Yan put down the final worry in his heart. His mind flashed and threads of Dou Qi were being drawn out from the Dou Crystal unceasingly. After which, they circulated along his Qi Paths, passed through the flame and once again returned to the Dou Crystal!

A perfect cycle. A perfect refinement. Under this kind of cyclic training, Xiao Yan could sense the increasingly surging Dou Qi in his Dou Crystal. According to this speed, it was likely that he would be able to reach the peak of a six star Da Dou shi without much time and break through to a seven star Da Dou Shi from this!

One did not have a precise concept of time when training. When everyone was swiftly raising their strength deep within them, there was a drive that appeared to cause them to anxiously want to train until they advanced to the next level.

The surface of everyone's body in the spacious training room was wrapped by a layer of faint invisible fluctuations. Thin, faint white-colored fog rose from their heads. Immediately, it gradually became fainter until it was finally transformed into nothingness and disappeared.

Occasionally, an intense quivering would appear on the invisible fluctuations on the surface of one's body. Following the occurrence of this quivering, a faint red glow would suddenly swarm onto their faces. At that moment, if they were to carefully increase their perception, they would discover that their aura was much stronger than what it was before.

Clearly, these people were extremely lucky to obtain a chance to advance the level of their strength during their first refinement.

Most of those in this training room who had a chance to advance their strength were those who had quite a good training talent but whose strength were only around that of a seven or eight star Dou Shi. People similar to Xiao Yan and Xun Er, whose strength had already reached that of a seven or eight star Da Dou Shi did not show such an advancement situation. After all, most of the students who were of similar level to them had already entered the second or third level to train. This first level middle grade training room could no longer fulfill their need.

The training time was like flowing water as it quietly elapsed between the gap of one's finger. When an ancient gong unknowingly sounded throughout the entire level, all the closed-eyed individuals in the training room slowly opened them. In an instant, the Qis of some people which could not be controlled properly due to the increase in their strength immediately spread all over the place.

Xiao Yan's eyes suddenly opened as a faint glow flashed past. He exhaled a deep breath of turbid air that had been restrained in his chest for a long while. As he twisted his neck, he could hear the clear cracking sound of his bones colliding with one another and laughed involuntarily. He turned his head and swept his gaze over the members of 'Pan's Gate' who had woken up, only to feel stunned. When his gaze swept over their eyes, he discovered that there was actually a thread of faint fiery redness.

"This should be caused by the the wild and violent energy factor that was mixed into their Dou Qi by the 'Fallen Heart Flame' due to the refinement of their Dou Qi." Since Xiao Yan was an expert in playing with fire, he was not unfamiliar with this kind of situation and managed to see the reason at a glance.

"It looks like it is indeed as Hou Hu had said. Those who are not strong cannot continue to train in this place. Otherwise, if an excessive amount of the wild and violent energy factor of the flame is accumulated, it would sooner or later result in a Fire Poison that is difficult to cure and damage one's body." Xiao Yan muttered and sighed in his heart.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, how was your training?” A soft gentle voice suddenly sounded beside Xiao Yan. He raised his head and discovered it was Xun Er who had just woken up.

Xiao Yan's gaze swept across Xun Er intelligent eyes before he raised his eyebrow, feeling somewhat surprised. This girl actually did not have the slightest abnormality even after training for so long. That manner appeared as though the wild and violent energy factor of the flame had no effect on her.

“This girl is also another one who hides her strength...” Xiao Yan muttered. He once again turned his head to where Hu Jia and Wu Hao were at and discovered that there was a wisp of an extremely faint red glow which vaguely existed in their eyes. Clearly, they, whose surface strength was similar to Xiao Yan and Xun Er, had also suffered the erosion from the wild and violent energy factor of the flame.

Xiao Yan shook his hand and a crystal card appeared in his hand. He rubbed that smooth mirror surface and stared carefully at himself for awhile, only to realize somewhat surprisingly that the traces of erosion had actually not appeared in his eyes.

“With the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ protecting your body, you can refine your Dou Qi without fear. Although the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ cannot compare with the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ in terms of its ranking on the ‘Heavenly Flame Ranking,’ it would be somewhat wishful thinking if just this small little split body were to cause any harm to you, who has the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’s’ protection. As for your little girlfriend, it is likely that she possesses some mysterious object to protect her body...” Yao Lao's voice quietly sounded in Xiao Yan's heart just as he was feeling doubtful.

Xiao Yan only came to a sudden understanding when he heard this. He nodded without leaving a trace. His heart rejoice a little as he asked, “In that case, I can continue to stay in this ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to train, and need not rest to resolve the wild and violent factor?”

“Yes. As long as you are able to endure the toughness of the training, the

you, who possesses the 'Green Lotus Core Flame,' can control the training time as you please." Yao Lao smiled as he replied.

"Ke ke, I have already endured this hardship for a few years, what can I not withstand?" Xiao Yan softly laughed. Some joy involuntarily surfaced on his face. With the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' protecting his body, the time he could train in the tower would greatly surpass other people. If this was the case, his training speed would also far exceed other people!

"Looks like I need to find an excuse to stay in the tower to train. I cannot just waste this precious time for no reason. If I can reach the Dou Ling class earlier, I will have the strength to snatch the 'Fallen Heart Flame' when there is a chance for it in the future!" A thought flashed across Xiao Yan's heart. He stood up from the black stone platform and flashed down from it. After which, he extended his hand, found Xun Er and told her some of his plans beside her ear.

Xun Er nodded after feeling a surprise in her heart. She focused on Xiao Yan's somewhat fervent face before saying gently, "You can rest assured. Hand the matters of 'Pan's Gate' to the three of us. You just need to be at ease and train."

Xiao Yan lowered his head and eyed that elegant and ethereal face. For some unknown reason, a slight ripple involuntarily surfaced in his calm heart. This girl was really becoming more and more pretty over the years. After having left to train for so many years, it was extremely difficult for Xiao Yan to meet one woman whose appearance and demeanor could compete with her.

Xiao Yan shook his head with all his might and temporarily threw aside his thoughts. He gently patted Xun Er's head before turning around and walking out of the training room by himself. Now, he needed to use some connections in order to conveniently be able to continue staying in the tower to train. Since he had the help of the 'Green Lotus Core Flame,' it really would not be justified if he did not grab hold of this unique opportunity.

Chapter 476: Second Level

After Xiao Yan walked out of the training room, he realized that the entire tower was in an extremely busy situation. People were coming and going, perhaps as a result of the gong. Quite a number of doors to various training rooms, which were tightly shut when he arrived, were currently all open. A large group of people swarmed out and swiftly walked to the exit of the tower. Xiao Yan could see a faint red glow in the eyes of all of these people.

Xiao Yan hesitated a little as he stood outside the training room. After which, he squeezed into the human flow and swiftly walked toward the middle section of the tower. The tunnel to the next level should be around there. It was obvious that one can only have a short one day stay on this first level. It appeared that he needed to go down a couple of levels if he wanted to continue training.

Xiao Yan followed the human flow as he squeezed and moved. His body agilely rushed forward in an extremely small range. This continued for less than ten minutes when the human flow blocking in front of him gradually became thinner. He turned his body, and completely squeezed out of the human crowd.

A sigh of relief was released in Xiao Yan's heart as he felt the feeling of being squeezed from all around disappear. His gaze had just swept all around him to look for the tunnel to enter into the next level when a human figure suddenly flashed in front of him. Immediately, a deep voice which held a complaining tone sounded by Xiao Yan's ear, "You, this fellow, do you not know the rules? Don't tell me that you don't know that it is forbidden to randomly charge around within the tower after the gong has sounded?"

The human figure that appeared in front of him caused Xiao Yan to hurriedly stop. He lifted his gaze, only to realize that the other party was a middle-aged man who was around the same age as Hou Hu. He similarly wore an instructor badge on his chest. It looked like he should be similar to Hou Hu, an instructor who was in charge of order within the tower.

“Instructor...”

Since the other party was an instructor, Xiao Yan naturally did not dare to randomly roam around. However, he had just opened his mouth to explain when this instructor, whose face was as heavy as water, waved his hand. He frowned and said, “There is no need to say anything. Since the training is over, you should go back and rest. Wait until the hidden Fire Poison has been resolved tomorrow before you come back to the tower to train. The tower is going to begin the inspection procedure soon. If you are discovered to be still staying here, your ‘Fire Energy’ will be deducted.”

Hidden Fire Poison should be the wild and violent factor that Hou Hu had mentioned. Although the name in which it was referred to was dissimilar, the actual meaning was about the same.

Seeing the stern face of this instructor, Xiao Yan could not help but feel a little headache. However, it was fortunate that the headache did not last very long before it was resolved by a voice.

“Huh? Xiao Yan? Why are you still here?” Xiao Yan’s heart immediately rejoiced when he heard this voice. He eyed Hou Hu who was striding over and hurriedly threw an expression at him.

There was some doubt in Hou Hu’s heart when he saw Xiao Yan winking at him. He walked forward and smiled as he said toward the middle-aged large man who was blocking Xiao Yan, “Qin Li, let me handle it, you can go and do your stuff.”

Hearing this, that instructor hesitated a moment. His gaze swept over Xiao Yan’s body and immediately nodded, “Alright. You need to quickly get him out. Otherwise, if he is discovered during the inspection, we will be reprimanded by Elder Liu.”

“Yes.” Hou Hu nodded.

That instructor Qin Li only turned around and left after seeing Hou Hu nodding his head.

After his gaze saw Qin Li vanish around a corner, Hou Hu turned his gaze toward Xiao Yan and spoke in an uncertain manner, “ Brother Xiao

Yan, isn't your training over? Why are you still wandering around here?"

"Hee hee, Brother Hou, I have something that I wish to ask for your help with." Xiao Yan leaned forward a little and hinted with a smile.

"What is the matter about?" Hou Hu blinked his eyes and asked.

"Hee hee, Brother Hou, you should also know that with my current strength, I am unable to obtain any effects by training on the first level. Hence, I wish to go a few levels down to train. May I know if you can accomodate me?" Xiao Yan asked softly.

"Go a couple of levels down?"

Hou Hu was startled when he heard this. He immediately shook his head and said, "Brother Xiao Yan, I know that the effect of training at the first level is not very notable for someone of your strength. However, according to the rules, no matter how strong the new students are, they must train at the first level for one week before that can enter and train in the few levels below. Regardless of what your strength is like, the grilling of the Heart Flame would ultimately cause the Dou Qi to be filled with some Fire Poison. This thing cannot be taken lightly. During these many years in the Inner Academy, there had been quite a number of people who have suffered irreversible losses because of the accumulation of the Fire Posion."

"Additionally, the grilling of the Heart Flame also requires some time to get used to. In this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' the strength of the Heart Flame and its degree of heat are increased exponentially every level down. You have not gotten used to the first level. It would be a little too risky to go down."

After hearing this large chunk of words from Hou Hu, Xiao Yan immediately felt a giddiness in his head. A long while later, he helplessly shook his head, pointed at his eyes and said, "Old Brother Hou, the Qi Method which I practice may not be of a high class but it has a little special effect; it has a certain resistance toward poisons like the Fire Poison. Hence, you need not worry that I will be injured in any way because of the Fire Poison. As for adaptation, you can also rest assured. I

have heard that usually those who are at the strength of around a five star Da Dou Shi would usually be able to enter the third level to train. I am now only entering the second level. There would not be too much of an effect.”

Hou Hu was stunned as he stared at Xiao Yan’s dark black, ink-like eyes. After working in the Inner Academy for so many years, he understood the Fire Poison extremely well. Hence, as long as he saw the other party’s eyes once, he would be able to identify whether there was Fire Poison in a person’s body. However, when he looked at Xiao Yan’s eyes at this moment, it appeared that Xiao Yan had really not been affected by the erosion of the Fire Poison.

“Alright, I believe that you have a resistance to Fire Poison. However, even if this is the case, it does not really follow the rules...” It was a long while later before Hou Hu sighed and nodded as he spoke somewhat grudgingly.

Seeing Hou Hu’s indecisive manner, Xiao Yan took a step forward. He flipped his hand and another jade bottle was stuffed into Hou Hu’s hands without leaving a trace. He smiled and said, “Brother Hou. You frequently work inside this tower. Although you are strong, it is likely that it is extremely difficult for the Fire Poison that your body absorbs everyday to disappear. This bottle of medicinal pill is called ‘Ice Spirit Pill.’ It may not be of a high tier but it has the effect of suppressing Fire Poison.”

Hou Hu’s heart pounded when a jade bottle was once again stuffed into his hand. After he heard Xiao Yan explain the effect of this medicinal pill, the hand of his which was holding the jade bottle immediately tightened. It appeared that he was afraid that it would immediately flee. It was just as Xiao Yan had said. As they frequently worked in this tower, the Fire Poison that the instructors suffered from was actually much more serious than the students. Moreover, there was the additional issue of not having sufficient rest occasionally. Hence, it was difficult to completely resolve the Fire Poison issue in them. After continuing in this manner for a long while, it was unavoidable that the flame in their hearts would rise occasionally, resulting in problems during their training.

Everyone knew the danger should something go wrong with one's training. Hence, when Hou Hu came to know that this medicinal pill actually contained the effect of suppressing Fire Poison, his heart was filled with surprise and joy at this moment.

Although it merely had a suppression effect and could not expel the Fire Poison, Hou Hu was still extremely satisfied. Therefore, after musing for a while, he laughed bitterly and sighed. His gaze eyed Xiao Yan somewhat strangely and said, "The things that you take out always cause people to be reluctant to reject your requests. Ah, alright. I will take a risk for you today. Follow me!"

Once he said that, Hou Hu's eyes swiftly swept all around him. After which, he pulled Xiao Yan, passed through a corner before swiftly walking to a spot in the middle of the room.

Xiao Yan heaved a long sigh of relief as he followed behind Hou Hu. The refinement of this 'Ice Spirit Pill' may be a little complicated, but it was not difficult. It was really unexpected that it actually had such a unique effect when it was used to bribe people. It really was a situation of something being used in the most suitable area.

After following behind Hou Hu for nearly five minutes, Xiao Yan finally sensed that the former had slowly reduced his pace. His eyes looked to the front and was coincidentally able to see that there was a spiral-shaped staircase at a corner not far away. It was likely the entrance to the next level.

"Fortunately, I am guarding the door today. Otherwise, I really could not let you down. Hei, don't move, be careful. There is a space glass placed here. You will only be rebounded by the force contained on it if you randomly charge in. The fate of that is to be, at the very least, seriously injured." Hou Hu swiftly walked to the entrance to the stairs. He said those words before he hurriedly held Xiao Yan who wanted to walk around him.

Only after being reminded by Hou Hu did Xiao Yan realize that the space at the entrance indeed had a faint feeling of being distorted. Immediately, he could not help but release cold sweat from being shocked.

The interior of this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' really had various mechanisms and traps all around. If one was not careful, one would end up being seriously injured.

After shocking Xiao Yan until he was still, Hou Hu extended his hand and removed the badge on his chest before he carefully placed it in a hidden notch on a wall to the side.

As the badge pressed on it, a slight fluctuation suddenly appeared in the space in front. In the time it took to blink a couple of times, Xiao Yan realized that the distorted space feeling had already completely disappeared.

"Can I go in now?" Xiao Yan carefully asked.

"Yes, the space glass has already been removed. You can now go down by yourself. After you enter, I need to continue watching this place. Only tomorrow morning when the tower door opens will this place be opened." Hou Hu nodded and said.

"Brother Hou Hu, thank you very much." Xiao Yan rejoiced when he heard this. He cupped his hands toward Hou Hu with gratitude before carefully extending his hand into the empty space in front of him. He touched around before he felt at ease as he walked down the stairs.

"Remember, if you cannot endure the grilling of the Heart Flame at the second level, find a place to rest. Come back up to train after the tower is opened tomorrow." Hou Hu reminded Xiao Yan.

"Ke ke, I understand. Thank you very much Brother Hou." Hou Hu's kind reminder caused Xiao Yan to smile and nod his head. He once again cupped his hands toward the former. With a flash of his body, he entered into the corner of the spiral staircase and disappeared.

Hou Hu tossed the jade bottle in his hand before carefully storing it away. He eyed the spot which Xiao Yan had disappeared from and sighed gently. In a soft voice, he said, "Little fellow, training in the lower levels may allow you to train faster but that is on the precondition that you can withstand the Heart Flame..."

“Hopefully, you will really be able to endure...”

Chapter 477: Exploration and Meeting

Xiao Yan walked along the spiral-shaped staircase for around five minutes before the sight in front of him suddenly became spacious. His body once again turned around a corner, and another spacious level within the tower appeared in his sight.

The size of the second level of the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' did not differ much from the first level. However, compared to the first level, it appeared a little more desolate. Moreover, it did not contain the congested feeling of the first level. Although there were small groups of students who were repeatedly walking past, it was undoubtedly much better compared to the the situation in the first level where even walking was difficult.

Xiao Yan's appearance caused the students who had come out from the surrounding training rooms to get a temporary rest to feel somewhat strange. However, there was not much commotion. Everyone's gaze shifted away after they swept over Xiao Yan's body. They talked privately among themselves, appearing doubtful about why Xiao Yan was still able to come down at this time.

Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze that was sweeping all around him. He was not too concerned about the gazes around him. He walked slowly and headed to the second level within the tower.

Xiao Yan breathed in a mouthful of the somewhat hot air after entering the tower. He could sense that the fiery heat contained in the air of this second level was far greater compared to the first level. It appeared that each time one descended one level within this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' the temperature would be much higher. He really did not know just how hot the last level was. It was likely only some Elders would dare to enter that kind of place.

Xiao Yan moved his feet and slowly walked through this corridor which had a circular path. On the left side of the corridor were the low grade training rooms at the outermost section of the tower. However, Xiao Yan's

aim was not here. Hence, he did not pause his footsteps as he continued to walk along the corridor and entered into the inner part of the tower. After nearly seven or eight minutes, he arrived at the middle grade training room area toward the inner part of the tower.

Xiao Yan stood in front of a middle grade training room where a tag, which represented there was no one within, was hung outside. He hesitated a little and did not immediately enter it to train. After musing for a while, he quietly headed to the middle area of this level. Since he had intentions on getting the 'Fallen Heart Flame,' he needed to figure out just what exactly was the bottomless black pit in the middle.

Xiao Yan walked out of the middle grade training room area and headed for the high grade training room area. The training rooms here undoubtedly appeared more exquisite compared to those outside. Moreover, they were much fewer in numbers. Xiao Yan carefully counted and realized that there were only eighteen high grade training rooms. Moreover, a special tag that indicated that there was someone training within was hanging outside the doors of these training rooms at this moment. Clearly, these training rooms had already been occupied by people.

A tall, enclosed wall stood further in the high grade training room area. Three middle-aged men wearing instructor badges on each of their chests stood straight by the metal door at the bottom of the enclosed wall while wearing an indifferent expression. When they saw Xiao Yan, who was at the intersection on the other side, the three of them threw over their gazes in union. Their gazes were filled with warning.

Seeing the tight defense, Xiao Yan could not help but shake his head in his heart. He could only give up the thought of inspecting. His gaze simply looked randomly around him before he turned around as though nothing had happened and headed to the middle grade training room area which he had passed while coming here.

Although Xiao Yan's footsteps were slowly leaving, Xiao Yan could still sense that the gazes of the three instructor were firmly placed on his body. This cautious defense really caused Xiao Yan to be a little speechless.

“Looks like there should be a secret that cannot be made public at the middle area. Otherwise, there would not be such a tight defense. Ah, this damn ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ is really troublesome.” Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. His footsteps slowly paused as he raised his head to eye the small-sized middle grade training room not far away. This kind of small-sized training room could only accommodate three to five people to train. It obviously could not be compared to the kind of spaces on the first level.

Xiao Yan looked left and right only to realize that there was only this room that carried a tag that informed people an empty spot remained in the room. Immediately, he moved his feet toward the middle grade training room and hurriedly walked over.

When he approached this middle grade training room, Xiao Yan gently pushed open the room’s door. After which, he entered the room lightly, flipped his hand and closed it.

Warm light shone throughout every single corner of the training room. In the middle of this training room, there were five stone platforms which were around two to three feet apart. There were people seated cross-legged and training on four of these stone platform. Hence, Xiao Yan could only lift his leg and walk toward the remaining empty stone platform.

Perhaps it was because of the sound of the door opening but when Xiao Yan entered the training room, the four closed-eyed students opened them. Their gazes revealed an alertness as they watched Xiao Yan walk over. They sighed in relief only when they did not discover any badge that represented a faction on his body.

Xiao Yan’s gaze swept over the four of them. He similarly discovered that they did not have any badges that represented any faction on their chest. It was likely that they were free people, who were those students that did not join any faction.

Although Xiao Yan did not wear the badge of any factions, the four people did not take the initiative to open their mouths to speak. They simply used their gazes to observe every single action of Xiao Yan.

“Four Da Dou Shi. However, seeing their unstable Qis, it is likely that they advanced to the Da Dou Shi class not long ago.” Xiao Yan sat cross-legged on the dark black platform. His gaze randomly swept over the back of the four of them and immediately muttered in his heart,

Xiao Yan flicked his hand and a green-colored Fire Crystal Card appeared in it.

“Green Fire Crystal Card?” The moment the Crystal Card appeared in Xiao Yan’s hand, four shocked voices immediately sounded in this training room. These voices contained some shock, envy and yearning...

Xiao Yan could not help but raise his eyebrows when he sensed the four yearning gazes that were shot from around him. He snorted as a powerful Qi surged out from within his body.

As they sensed the powerful Qi that surged out from Xiao Yan’s body, the expressions of the four of them involuntarily changed a little. They hurriedly withdrew their covetous gaze and no longer dared to display the slightest greed. Looking at the Qi which Xiao Yan displayed, he was undoubtedly much stronger than them.

Seeing that these fellows were shaken, Xiao Yan slowly withdrew his Qi. The Green Fire Crystal Card was inserted into the notch in front of him. Immediately, a faint glow was emitted. During the time this glow shot out explosively, Xiao Yan suddenly realized that two days of ‘Fire Energy’ was deducted from the number of ‘Fire Energy’ in his Fire Crystal Card at one go!

Xiao Yan frowned slightly and muttered in his heart, “Don’t tell me that the further one descends, the fee required to train for one day also increases? This Inner Academy is really harsh.”

Xiao Yan helplessly shook his head. He gradually closed his eyes as his hands formed the training seal in front of him. Awhile later, his breathing gradually became calm and he once again entered into his training condition.

.....

Over ten old men were seated orderly in a spacious large bright room. Under the warm light, one was able to clearly see the badges that they wore on their chest. They were shockingly all special badges which only Elders had the qualification to wear.

Although the room was large, the atmosphere was somewhat depressing. A long while later, an old man seated on the leader's chair with an appearance that one could not clearly see coughed softly. He took the lead to break the silence in the room as an old voice slowly resounded across the interior of the room, "That thing is beginning to be unstable again during these few days..."

The remaining old men frowned when they heard his words.

"After observing it during this period of time, I discovered that the fluctuations which 'it' emitted are much more intense than in the past. Moreover, from the emotions that 'it' emits, it is also become increasingly irritable..." The old voice continued to talk as it pleased, "From the looks of the situation, I'm afraid that within these few years, a huge counterattack will appear. If it is not handled properly, I'm afraid that it will be an extremely great trouble."

"What about if we join hands and reinforce the defense once again? If that is really not going to work, let us inform the Headmasters of the Inner and Outer Academy. This thing cannot be exposed. Otherwise, those fellows from the 'Black-Corner Region' might covet and charge over to snatch it. Although our Inner Academy is deep within the mountains, it is coincidentally not far from the northern part of the 'Black-Corner Region.' Once something happens, those old fellows who have been paying attention to the Inner Academy will immediately rush over after hearing the news. With their experience, the seal on the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' may not escape their notice..." An old man voiced his thoughts.

"It is a must to strengthen the defense... however, the Headmaster is undergoing a deep retreat. The Outer Academy Headmaster is also likely to head out and travel around. No one knows where he is now." The old man at the leader's seat slowly shook his head. He mused for a moment before he suddenly lifted his head and threw a gaze toward an Elder in a

corner. He said, "Elder Liu, how is that little fellow who possesses a 'Heavenly Flame' now?"

"He is currently training in the second level. Perhaps it is because he also possesses a 'Heavenly Flame,' but he is actually not afraid of the Fire Poison erosion. I have also did as First Elder has instructed and gave him sufficient care." Elder Liu, who had met Xiao Yan once, hurriedly stood up and replied respectfully.

"Ah." The black-robed old man in the leader's seat nodded slightly. His old voice appeared a little low, "Ah, it really is unexpected. A 'Fallen Heart Flame' caused our Inner Academy to rise. Yet, a little fellow who is not even twenty years old actually possesses such a mysterious object all by himself. It really causes people to be envious."

"All Elders, if you meet this little fellow, you can try to make things convenient for him. Perhaps, when the 'Fallen Heart Flame' rebels in the future, we may need to rely on his strength... Ah, we cannot underestimate the strength of a 'Heavenly Flame.' Such a mysterious object is born from assembling the spirits of the Heavens and Earth. It possesses destructive strength. If one is not careful, I'm afraid that even the Inner Academy can face the threat of being destroyed." The First Elder whose entire body was wrapped in a black robe sighed and said.

"Yes!"

The ten plus Elders who were extremely respected by the Inner Academy's students all stood up at this moment and replied in union.

"Yes, alright. All of you can disperse. Oh, that's right. Remember to watch the movement of those large factions in the northern region of the 'Black-Corner Region' all the time. Especially those few fellows. There has been some unusual action in the Blood Sect recently. I heard that it is because of the death of that old fellow's son. It really doesn't allow us to stay relaxed..." The First Elder waved his hand and coughed a couple of times before speaking.

All the Elders nodded slightly. Their bodies immediately swayed, and they turned into vague black shadows that accompanied a breeze and

disappeared from this tight room.

When everyone from the room had disappeared, that First Elder, whose entire body was wrapped within a black robe, finally stood up slowly. As his body straightened, it actually became increasingly illusionary. When he completely stood up from the chair, his body had already strangely disappeared from the room...

Chapter 478: Seven Star Da Dou Shi

The invisible flame soared and burned within Xiao Yan's heart. Threads of Dou Qi swarmed out unceasingly from the Dou Crystal. After which, they passed through the refinement of the flame, and once again returned to the Dou Crystal within the vortex.

Under this perfect cycle, the Dou Crystal, which was originally only the size of a thumb was already nearing the size of a pigeon egg. Moreover, the glow that was contained on the surface of it was becoming increasingly bright...

This change of the Dou Crystal naturally did not escape Xiao Yan attention. Since he was in a training state, he was not too certain just how long he had trained this time around. However, from looking at the powerful Dou Qi contained within the Dou Crystal, it appeared that he had already reached the peak of a six star Da Dou Shi. Perhaps he would be able to truly enter the seven star Da Dou Shi level very soon!

The Heart Flame rose endlessly near his heart, providing Xiao Yan with inexhaustible refining energy. All the cycles currently in Xiao Yan's body were basically in a sort of an automatic process after having circulated for a long time. The Dou Qi did not require the control of Xiao Yan's mind as it swarmed out of the Dou Crystal by itself, followed the path of the cycle, passed through the flame, and finally returned to the Dou Crystal once again.

Xiao Yan was naturally not foolish enough to break this kind of automatic training condition that was relatively difficult to come across. He simply quietly watched the increasingly bright glow of the Dou Crystal by the side.

.....

There was no concept of time when it came to training. When Xiao Yan's somewhat chaotic mind was once again woken up by a strange fluctuation, he was surprised to realize that the rhombus Dou Crystal within the vortex was actually like a star, repeatedly pulsating with a

unique glow.

This sudden action of the Dou Crystal caused Xiao Yan to feel surprise for awhile before he understood with great joy that the chance for advancement had actually arrived!

Xiao Yan forcefully suppressed the wild joy that had rose within his heart. He did not issue any order to the Dou Crystal, but merely adopted the attitude of an observer as he carefully watched its actions.

The rhombus-shaped Dou Crystal was suspended within the vortex. Suddenly, a suction force seeped out from within it. Following the appearance of this suction force, Xiao Yan could sense that the powerful Dou Qi, which was still flowing through the Qi Paths in his body, appeared to have received a dragging force. It began to turn into a turbulent flood water as it carried a muted bang and swiftly swarmed into the vortex located in his lower abdomen.

At this moment, not only was the interior of Xiao Yan's body experiencing a change but a large movement had also appeared on the exterior of his body. The moment the Dou Crystal emitted a suction force, the energy that was spread all over Xiao Yan's body involuntarily swiftly fluctuated. A moment later, waves of heated energy began to wildly pour into Xiao Yan at the middle!

The energy in the training room far exceeded the outside world. Hence, when the energy was pouring in, the people around could even see a partially visible energy swirl being swiftly formed with Xiao Yan at the middle.

The remaining four students within the training room were also awakened from their training condition due to the shock from the sudden movement. They were startled when their gazes saw the energy swirl over the surface of Xiao Yan's body. Immediately, their faces were filled with envy. Clearly, they knew what this movement meant.

"This fellow has trained without eating or sleeping for nearly four days. He really is an abnormal being..." A student eyed Xiao Yan who was wildly absorbing the surrounding energy and involuntarily whispered.

Since Xiao Yan arrived at this training place four days ago, he had not made even the slightest movement. During these four days, the other four students had all left to rest a couple of times before returning to the tower to train. Xiao Yan, on the other hand, had continued training until this day under their astonished eyes. If it were not for Xiao Yan's calm breathing, it was likely that they would have already reported it to the instructor within the tower.

"I have inquired around today. This fellow is the leader of the new students this year. He is called Xiao Yan and is very strong. Rumor has it that even Fu Ao from the 'White Gang' was defeated by him." A lady with a somewhat tender and lovely appearance stared at Xiao Yan's face and carefully informed the rest.

"He is Xiao Yan? Hei, originally I did not really believe the rumors about him. However, now that I have seen him, it looks like they are true." A surprise immediately swarmed onto the faces of the other three students when they heard this. Clearly, they did not find Xiao Yan's name unfamiliar despite them not having joined any faction.

"Shh, be a little quieter. If we are to accidentally interrupt his advancement, we will be in trouble..." That lady placed a finger on her lips as she softly chastised.

"Yes." The remaining three nodded slightly. They similarly understood just what kind of fury a person would have should their advancement be interrupted.

.....

The Dou Crystal in Xiao Yan's vortex repeatedly released a suction force. The Dou Qi within his Qi Paths had been completely withdrawn. The Dou Qi that endlessly swarmed into his body from outside was not immediately absorbed into the Dou Crystal like the Dou Qi in his body. Instead, it was controlled such that it passed through that invisible flame within his body, undergoing a refinement. After which, it once again followed the Qi Paths in his body and completed a cycle before it entered into the Dou Crystal under the observation of Xiao Yan's pleased mind!

Although no one controlled the actions of the Dou Crystal, the latter completed this absorption, circulation, refinement and other steps without any mistake. Its control over the strength of the flame was perfect. Xiao Yan would likely be unable to achieve such a level of control if he controlled it himself.

Xiao Yan's action of totally washing his hands off and not bothering about anything appeared to have coincidentally allowed him to obtain a greater achievement.

As time flowed by, the suction force that was emitted from within the Dou Crystal grew increasingly powerful. The energy that poured into his body from the outside world also grew increasingly swift. If it were not because of the special terrain at this place and that the invisible flame could unceasingly appear, perhaps even the flame which refined the energy would cease working because of exhaustion of its energy.

Once the invisible flame disappeared, this refinement step would automatically disappear. At that time, Xiao Yan might have to personally take the helm. Otherwise, if he allowed the mottled energies to enter into his Dou Crystal, it was likely that he would not only have no hope to advance, but it would also cause him damage that would be difficult to remedy.

All the activities in the interior of Xiao Yan's body and the outside world were being orderly carried out under the command of his Dou Crystal. This advancement was undoubtedly the easiest one Xiao Yan had experienced. By borrowing the effect of the invisible flame, Xiao Yan had successfully become a leader who abandoned his duty for once.

When the suction force in the Dou Crystal had been emitted for around twenty minutes, it finally began to weaken. As the suction force weakened, the energy swirl that Xiao Yan had created also slowly became weaker and finally completely disappeared.

The final thread of somewhat mottled energy passed through the invisible flame. Its body, which had shrunk by nearly ten times, was finally carried and circulated in a complete cycle through the Qi Paths before

entering the Dou Crystal within the vortex...

As the final threads of Dou Qi poured in, the somewhat trembling Dou Crystal suddenly stilled. The glow which it emitted suddenly surged. Bright intense light shone on every single spot within his body. Under the shine of this strange powerful light, Xiao Yan could vaguely feel his Qi Paths, bones, and even cells emitting an inaudible relaxed sigh...

The strange powerful light continued for merely ten seconds before it slowly withdrew. A moment later, the light grew increasingly dim until it finally disappeared.

The moment the powerful glow disappeared, the Dou Crystal which was hidden within it appeared!

When the Dou Crystal appeared, it let out a slight tremble. A thread of powerful Dou Qi swarmed out. Finally, it was entrenched into his Qi Paths like a green-colored torrent. It swiftly channeled past, giving Xiao Yan repeated feelings of being filled with energy!

Xiao Yan's mind studied the rhombus-shaped Dou Crystal, which was nearly two to three circular layers larger than before. He sensed the Dou Qi reserve was more than twice what it was before. Xiao Yan could not help but let out a long sigh of relief. At least this tough training of his was not wasted...

As Xiao Yan's tensed heart slowly relaxed, he was gradually unable to maintain his training condition. His spirit was a little too giddy and he immediately withdrew from his training condition...

Xiao Yan slowly opened his eyes within the spacious training room. A faint green-colored glow flashed across his dark black eyes. He lifted his head slightly and swept it toward the other four people in the room. When they saw him sweep his gaze over, the remaining four people hurriedly turned their gazes away. At this moment, Xiao Yan had just completed his advancement and the force all over his body had reached its peak. How could they, as people who had just advanced to the Da Dou Shi class, contend with him?

Xiao Yan did not bother with the four people. He released a long turbid

breath. His dark black eyes immediately became even deeper and more transparent.

Xiao Yan twisted his body and adjusted himself quietly before he withdrew the green Fire Crystal Card in front of him. He randomly glanced at it with his pupils and was stunned to realize that eight days of 'Fire Energy' had been deducted...

"How long have I trained for?" Xiao Yan frowned, turned his head and asked a student.

"Four days..." Seeing that Xiao Yan had voiced a question, that student hurriedly replied honestly.

"I actually trained for four days... no wonder..." Xiao Yan muttered helplessly. However, he rejoiced slightly within his heart. He had merely trained for four days, yet he had actually broken through to the seven star level. If it was in the outside world, this was impossible without one or two months.

"This 'Fallen Heart Flame'... does indeed have unceasing wonders... its split body that shoots into people's hearts can actually cause a person to raise their training speed to such an extent. If one possessed its actual body, just how frightening will one's training speed be?"

Xiao Yan praised once before he stood up. He directly walked out of the training room. After training for four days without rest or sleep, he needed to temporarily rest for awhile. Although working hard when training was good, Xiao Yan also knew that one would not be able to achieve anything if one overdid things...

Chapter 479: The Changes of Pan's Gate

The warm sunlight scattered down as Xiao Yan walked out of the tower, causing Xiao Yan, who had stayed in the tower for a full five days, to have an impulse to simply lie down and not move. He covered his face with his hand and gazed at the blue sky through the gap between his fingers. He involuntarily inhaled a deep breath of fresh air with all his might. Although training in the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' was able to let one train at a faster pace, that kind of dullness caused people's hearts to be far too depressed.

The Inner Academy had also thought of this point, which was why the light within the tower was made such that it was warm but not gloomy. However, no matter what was done, the tower was ultimately a tower. No matter how sufficient the light was within the tower, it would still feel like a cage-like area in anyone's eyes. Only by looking at the vast sky outside would one be able to feel one's emotions open up.

"No wonder the Inner Academy tries to think of all ways to prohibit students from staying in the tower for too long. By staying for a long time, a deformity might really form in one's mentality..." Xiao Yan quietly muttered. Only then did he move his feet and walk along the path that slowly headed for the area where 'Pan's Gate' was at.

"I have not come out for four days. I wonder just how Xun Er and the rest are. They should not have encountered any problems..." As Xiao Yan thought in this manner within his heart, his footsteps involuntarily increased in speed.

Having walked this path for quite a number of times, Xiao Yan did not reach the point of making the mistake of being lost. Hence, after half an hour of rushing, the new students' residence area appeared in his sight. His hurried footsteps also became a little slower after discovering that there was nothing amiss.

Using a laid back pace, Xiao Yan slowly walked into the residence area when his footsteps suddenly came to a halt. He knit his brows together as

he eyed the four students at the entrance of the residence area as his eyes swiftly swept over their chests, only to discover a similar badge on them. The badge was entirely pale green in color and there was a black-colored object carved onto it.

“What faction do these people belong to? Don’t tell me that they are here to find trouble with us again?” A thought flashed across Xiao Yan’s heart. His expression became much darker and gloomier. Were these fellows not being too much like bullies? They had come to create trouble time and time again. Did they really think that these new students did not have a temper?

Xiao Yan moved his hand slightly and an enormous heavy ruler strangely flashed and appeared. He held the hilt of the ruler tightly as he walked toward the four students at the entrance with a dark and solemn face. The dark and deep anger on his face was something that anyone could see.

At this moment, the four students at the door also saw Xiao Yan. They were immediately startled before the four of them directly rushed over to Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and directly watched the four people. His toes stepped on the ground. However, his body had just rushed forward when the excited cries from the mouths of the four people caused his face to be stunned.

“Chief, you are finally back!”

The heavy ruler in his hand was abruptly inserted into the ground, using this to stop his body which was just about to charge forward. He was surprised as he eyed the four people who had come to his side. A long while later, he asked somewhat uncertainly, “You are... people from ‘Pan’s Gate?’”

“Hee hee, Yes.” A young man among them who had an ordinary face, but a brilliant smile, nodded and spoke with that smile on his face, “Senior Xun Er said that since we are a faction, we should have a badge that belongs to us. She said that this would increase the sense of belonging the

members have toward 'Pan's Gate'."

Xiao Yan sighed in relief within his heart. He felt a little ashamed. As a leader, he was really somewhat irresponsible. He was actually not able to remember the faces of the members and had even nearly attacked them earlier...

Xiao Yan swept his gaze over the four people. Now that they had come close to him, Xiao Yan realized that the black-colored object on the badge seemed to be the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand while that green colored background seemed to be the same color as his 'Green Lotus Core Flame.'

"This girl is really quite meticulous..." Xiao Yan laughed softly, patted the four excited people beside him and asked, "Xun Er should be inside, right?"

"Yes, Senior Xun Er is inside. Now, our 'Pan's Gate' also have our own guard unit. Everyday, four people will take turns to stand guard and protect the residence. Moreover, there are ten members waiting for orders inside at any one time, ready to handle any unexpected situations. Senior Xun Er gave the other members the freedom of movement so that they can be familiar with the geography of the Inner Academy as soon as possible." That young man appeared to be eloquent. He was leading the way while talking about the changes that had happened to 'Pan's Gate' during these short four days as though he was pouring beans.

Xiao Yan quietly listened to him speak and could not help but praise within his heart. This girl really did have some ability. In just a few short days, she was able to consolidate 'Pan's Gate' such that it appeared totally new. These kind of measures were something that Xiao Yan, who was used to being alone, could not produce.

When they were entering into the entrance of the residence area, the other three members of 'Pan's Gate' paused. They continued to perform sentry while that eloquent young man continued to lead the way at the front until he brought Xiao Yan to the small pavilion home at the innermost area. Only then did he stop.

"Hee hee, chief, you can go in by yourself. I still need to return to do

sentry. Senior Xun Er said that as long as we complete three full days of sentry and that no unexpected events happen during this period of time, we will be able to receive one day of 'Fire Energy.' The other brothers and sisters are all snatching to do this work now. Ha ha." The young man smiled and explained after he stopped walking.

Xiao Yan opened his mouth when he saw the young man's somewhat urgent and prideful face. His heart was finally filled with admiration. The girl had merely used some simple means to cause people to compete for the work of doing sentry. Although this kind of means was not too special, how many factions within the Inner Academy had the boldness and resolution to take out 'Fire Energy' as a reward? They themselves would feel that there was not enough of it. Xiao Yan, who had went to the second level of the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' clearly understood just how large the demand for 'Fire Energy' was in the lower parts of the tower.

"What is your name?" Xiao Yan smiled and asked just before the young man left.

"Chief, I am called Tie Mu. You must definitely look for me if you have problems in the future. Even if I cannot win in a fight, there are many brothers within our 'Pan's Gate!'" The young man who called himself Tie Mu smiled as he rubbed his face, feeling a little shock at the great treatment Xiao Yan was giving him by inquiring for his name.

"Ke ke, alright. You should go and do your stuff." Xiao Yan nodded. He eyed the back of the other person as the latter ran with large steps and once again sighed at the changes of 'Pan's Gate.' The current 'Pan's Gate' was filled with an extremely solid cohesion. This kind of strength was the most basic factor that would enable a faction to grow.

Xiao Yan smiled in his heart as he turned around and pushed open the door to the pavilion home before slowly walking in.

Upon entering the pavilion home, Xiao Yan's gaze swept in all directions before finally stopping on a windowsill on the second story, where the beautiful back of someone carefully watering a flower was.

At this moment, faint sunlight poured through the window, shining on

the tall and delicate body. The body was like a green lotus swaying under the sunlight, appearing elegant and otherworldly, but was filled with temptation at the same time.

Xiao Yan's gaze was somewhat blurred as he watched that beautiful figure. He remained quiet, unwilling to break this beautiful drawing.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge?"

No matter how beautiful the drawing was, there would ultimately come a time when one returned to reality. After she placed the watering pot in her hand down, the young lady finally saw the black-robed young man below. A faint joy and sleek redness involuntarily surfaced on her exquisite face.

Xiao Yan recovered when he heard the clear voice of the young lady. He smiled at the latter before slowly walking up to the second story. As his hands rubbed Xun Er's head, he smiled and praised, "Girl, not bad. I didn't expect that in only four days, you would have managed 'Pan's Gate' in such a manner. I have really underestimated you."

"There is also Elder Sister Hu Jia's efforts here." Seeing that there was no strange expression on Xiao Yan's face, Xun Er quietly sighed in relief. She naturally pulled at Xiao Yan's hand and said with a lovely smile.

"It is fortunate that there are the both of you. Otherwise, this 'Pan's Gate' would sooner or later be managed by Wu Hao and me until it is about to collapse..." Xiao Yan laughed bitterly. He understood his own ability. Moreover, Wu Hao, that fighting lunatic was clearly no expert in management.

"That's right, where is Hu Jia and Wu Hao?" Xiao Yan swept in gaze in all direction and asked uncertainly.

Xun Er pursed her lips and laughed softly. She said, "Elder Sister Hu Jia has gone to the Dou Technique Hall. She wants to see if there are any high class Dou Technique suitable for her there. As for Wu Hao... he went to the Fighting Arena. Moreover, he has not come back for the past two days, but Xiao Yan ge-ge need not worry. There are people from our 'Pan's Gate' there. Someone will inform us if there is something wrong."

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He eyed that artfully smiling, splendid and exquisite face, and his heart could not help but pound. He extended his hand and held that delicate narrow waist which filled his grip. After which, he pulled the somewhat embarrassed Xun Er into a tight hug.

“You’ve worked hard. Xun Er...” Xiao Yan’s chin was placed in front of Xun Er’s forehead as he softly muttered.

“Why is Xiao Yan ge-ge being so courteous to Xun Er? When we were young...” Xun Er suddenly smiled. Before she had completed saying what she wanted to, she was interrupted by Xiao Yan.

“During these few years, you have already repaid me by over a hundredfold for those accidental actions that I did when I was young...” Xiao Yan softly sighed. What this girl had given to him was a little too much. Originally, with her elegant lotus-like character, it was very difficult for her to worry about a certain man in her heart. Moreover, with her outstandingness, there were truly very few men of similar age who could catch her eye. Although the strength on the surface was but a seven star Da Dou Shi, Xiao Yan would never forget how she, as a person who had just become a Dou Zhe back then at Wu Tan City, had unleashed the strength of a Da Dou Shi because of the alchemist Liu Xi, whom the Jia Li clan had hired.

Three years ago, she was able to reach the strength of a Da Dou Shi. Three years later...

As he thought up to this point, Xiao Yan once again laughed bitterly.

Xun Er’s face gently leaned against Xiao Yan’s chest. Xun Er did not mind. A stubborn shallow arc was lifted at the corner of her mouth. A moment later, she suddenly recalled something and her expression became straight. She broke free from Xiao Yan’s chest and pulled him along as she hurriedly walked into her room.

“What is it?” Xun Er’s action caused Xiao Yan to be startled as he asked doubtfully.

“There’s someone I want you to see.” Xun Er smiled. She gently clapped with her delicate hand. The dark shadow from a corner of the room was

suddenly slowly extended. After which, it agglomerated together and wiggled swiftly.

In Xiao Yan's somewhat shocked gaze, the dark shadow gradually agglomerated into the human figure of an old man. Finally, a somewhat familiar face that carried a smile appeared in Xiao Yan's eyes.

"Ke ke, young friend Xiao Yan. Have you been well since we parted..." The old man could not help but ask with a smile when he saw Xiao Yan's increasingly stunned gaze.

"You... you are old man Ling?" Xiao Yan's eyes stared at the old man in front of him. A moment later, he spoke in a somewhat disbelieving manner.

Old man Ling. The old man who had appeared in front of Xiao Yan was shockingly that mysterious Dou Huang helper with an unknown background back when the latter had charged into the Misty Cloud Sect...

Chapter 480: Tou She Ancient God's Jade?

Seeing Xiao Yan stunned as well as astonished manner, Ling Ying smiled and nodded. He bowed slightly toward Xun Er. "Young Lady (Young Lady)!"

Xiao Yan gradually recovered from his dumbfoundedness. When he heard the manner in which Ling Ying addressed Xun Er, his gaze involuntarily turned toward the latter. There was some relief in his eyes as he frowned slightly and said, "The both of you..."

"Ke ke, Young Master Xiao Yan. Around less than half a year after you have left Wu Tan City, I obeyed Young Lady's dispatch and arrived at the Jia Ma Empire. I went to search for your traces and to quietly protect you along the way." Ling Ying smiled and explained, "You should not blame Young Lady for making her own decision to intervene in your matter. It is just that the you then was alone and weak. It was extremely dangerous to venture out into the Jia Ma Empire alone. After arriving at the Jia Nan Academy, Young Lady was really worried. Hence, she got me to quietly go and protect you."

"Originally, I was the final protection that the Clan Head arranged for Young Lady. During that period of time that I was not around her was perhaps the period of time when Young Lady's protection was at its weakest. Now, you may perhaps vaguely know how enormous the faction behind Young Lady is. Hence, there are quite a number of people who have intentions toward Young Lady. Fortunately, this Jia Nan Academy is indeed worthy of being an ancient academy renown throughout the continent and did not allow any trouble to befall Young Lady. Otherwise, I'm afraid that I will have to receive an extremely strict dressing down by the Clan Head." Ling Ying smiled as he spoke. The hidden meaning behind these words was to allow Xiao Yan to understand clearly just how much of a risk Xun Er took to ensure his safety and not form any resentful emotions toward Xun Er because of this. After having been with Xiao Yan for a period of time, he clearly knew that this fellow had a great discrimination against monitoring him in secret.

Xiao Yan was naturally able to hear the meaning behind Ling Ying's words. Immediately he sighed softly, patted Xun Er's head with his hand and laughed bitterly, "You this girl... what problems will I have? You have really underestimated me?"

Seeing that there was no blaming look on Xiao Yan's expression, Xun Er quietly sighed in relief. She suddenly smiled but did not open her mouth to explain herself.

"Old Ling, the last time, we parted in a hurry. Now that we have met, Xiao Yan will once again say thank you for lending a hand last time." Xiao Yan stood straight and bowed slightly toward Ling Ying while speaking in a deep voice.

"Ke ke, why does Young Master Xiao Yan need to be so courteous? I merely did as I was ordered." Ling Ying hurriedly waved his hand and replied.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge. This time around, the main reason for me letting you meet with Old Ling is because I have got him to carefully investigate the movement of the experts within our clan during this period of time. He did not discover any elite Dou Huangs entering the Jia Ma Empire during these few years..." Xun Er softly said.

Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. Originally, he merely suspected that there was some relationship between his father's disappearance and the faction behind Xun Er. However, after he had discussed it with her, his doubt had become fainter. However, he did not expect that this girl had actually gone to the trouble of sending people to investigate.

"Young Master Xiao Yan, the matter of your father's disappearance is indeed not related to us. The Xiao clan or perhaps I should say the Xiao clan from a long time ago has some deep relations to us. There are far too many favors and grudges within this relationship... there have indeed been some strong people within the clan who suggested we bring all the members of your Xiao clan back. However, they chose to give up due to the enormous dispute." Ling Ying mused for a moment before he slowly

spoke, "In the recent few years, there has seldom been anyone who brought up this matter. Hence, your father's disappearance should be done by someone else."

Xiao Yan frowned intently and sighed. His voice was low and deep as he said, "Our Xiao clan is but a second rate faction within an empire. How can it bother a strong Dou Huang such that he would act against it? If this is the case, it is likely that the greatest suspicion still lies with the Misty Cloud Sect. Ah. That damn First Elder..."

Xiao Zhan went missing while being chased by that First Elder of the Misty Cloud Sect. Moreover, there was no one else present at that time. Therefore... whether the person went missing or was secretly kidnapped by him was likely something that no one else would know other than him. However, the party involved was already dead now. The traces of Xiao Zhan had become even more bewildering. However, no matter how one looked at this matter, it has some relation with the Misty Cloud Sect.

Back then Xiao Yan had lost his reasoning and killed the First Elder on the spot in his anger. After which, he was chased by the Misty Cloud Sect with great effort and he had to flee. Finally, he had escaped out of the Jia Ma Empire. He did not have even a little time during this period to give any deep thoughts to some of the strangeness regarding this matter. Now that he had once again mentioned the Misty Cloud Sect, Xiao Yan, who had calmed down, began to have some doubts in his heart... however, from the looks of the expression of the First Elder just before he died, it did not appear that he was lying...

"Ugh..."

Xiao Yan used all his strength to shake his head as he sighed. No matter how one put it, the Misty Cloud Sect did have some hidden foggy implication with regards to the disappearance of his father. He might perhaps obtain some clues regarding this matter when he returned to the Jia Ma Empire in the future...

Now, however, the him who was chased after with the intention to kill, still did not possess the kind of strength to contend with the entire Misty

Cloud Sect. Hence, the only thing that Xiao Yan could do now was to quietly undergo bitter training and prepare to obtain the 'Fallen Heart Flame' at any point in time. He clearly knew that if he were to train in a normal fashion, it would likely be impossible for him to possess the strength to return and take revenge on the Misty Cloud Sect without five years worth of time. Therefore... his hope entirely lay with the 'Fallen Heart Flame.' As long as he possessed this second type of 'Heavenly Flame,' the him who practices the mysterious 'Flame Mantra' would possess a strength that could truly contend with the Misty Cloud Sect.

"Misty Cloud Sect..." Ling Ying's mouth also repeated this faction which he did not think much of back then. A strange expression suddenly flashed in his turbid eyes. However, it completely disappeared an instant later.

"Misty Cloud Sect... it is related to them once again. Back then, when I was chased out of the Jia Ma Empire by them, I had said that I would sooner or later return! At that time, I will definitely get to the bottom of this matter!" Xiao Yan violently held his fist. His voice contained a suppressed violent anger and killing intent.

Xun Er nodded slightly and softly said, "I will let someone observe the Misty Cloud Sect... Xiao Yan ge-ge also need not be too anxious. Training with a mind at ease is the correct path."

Xiao Yan's expression was slightly dark and solemn. A moment later, he nodded and rubbed his head with his hand. He once again conversed with Ling Ying for awhile before he, who was not too interested, frowned and left Xun Er's room by himself.

Xun Er watched Xiao Yan's back as he left. She waved her delicate hand and a wind shut the door tightly. Immediately, she was afraid that it was not secure and she shot out a golden glow from her palm which finally covered the entire room.

.....

"Old Ling, you seem to know something related to the Misty Cloud Sect?" Xun Er suddenly spoke after laying the soundproofing properly.

Ling Ying was startled when he heard this. He hesitated for a moment before nodding. His low soft voice said, "This time, when I went back, I specially checked some of the information regarding the Misty Cloud Sect, only to discover some things that I did not know in the past..."

"Speak." Xun Er's pupils narrowed. A shocking faint golden glow flashed passed as she waved her hand and spoke.

"This faction which has been holed up within the Jia Ma Empire appears to have some hidden and extremely obscure contact with 'those fellows'..." Ling Ying slowly said.

"Those fellows?" Xun Er was slightly startled. Her pretty face immediately changed a little. "You are talking about them?"

"Yes." Ling Ying nodded.

"Why would the Misty Cloud Sect be involved with them? No matter how one put it, the Misty Cloud Sect once had some strong people at the peak who possessed quite a reputation within the continent. Why would they get involved with them?" Xun Er spoke doubtfully.

"I am not certain... however, it appears that they were involved for only a short period of time. Perhaps they were only involved with the last Misty Cloud Sect leader, who is also the current elite Dou Zong Yun Shan. I'm afraid that not many people within the Misty Cloud Sect knows about this. I think that even the current Misty Cloud Sect Leader Yun Yun is also unaware of the connection between Yun Shan and them... otherwise..." Ling Ying hesitated for a moment when he revealed information up to this point. He eyed Xun Er's tranquil face and softly said, "Otherwise, it would be impossible for her not to display things due to the little relationship between her and Young Master Xiao Yan..."

Xun Er nodded slightly. Her expression was still calm and did not have any change because of these words. Her voice only appeared a little colder. "If they are really involved with the Misty Cloud Sect... then Uncle Xiao Zhan's disappearance may well have some relationship with them. After all... they also know that the Xiao clan had a portion of the key related to 'that thing'. However, these fellows clearly know of our relationship with

the Xiao clan. Yet they still dare act in such a reckless manner. They are really becoming increasingly wild.”

“Yes.”

Ling Ying nodded his head. He stared at Xun Er before speaking somewhat hesitantly, “Young Lady, you have been in the Xiao clan for over a decade... back then the clan allowed you to come to the Xiao clan with the intention of letting you secretly obtain that key from the Xiao clan. However, you have come to the Jia Nan Academy. Now, after so many years, you still do not have any news related to the key. This time when I went back, I heard that some dissatisfaction had appeared in the clan... if it was not because the ancestors of the Xiao clan having once had a blood oath with the clan, I’m afraid that there are some people who intend to use force.”

Xun Er raised her eyes slightly. A golden-colored flame leaped within her intelligent eyes as she said in a calm voice, “Just ignore them.”

Ling Ying could only smile bitterly and nod when he heard this.

“You should temporarily not tell Xiao Yan ge-ge about the matter of the Misty Cloud Sect’s involvement with ‘them.’ It will not be too late to tell him about it once he has the strength to contend with the Misty Cloud Sect. If we tell him about it now, I’m afraid that it would be detrimental for him.” Xun Er reminded.

“Yes.” Ling Ying nodded and replied respectfully.

“Ah... you should leave the Inner Academy first. There are too many strong people around here. If they were to discover traces of you, there would definitely be some trouble.” Xun Er waved her hand and ordered.

“Yes.” Ling Ying once again nodded as he said, “I will stay deep in the mountains. If Young Lady has any problems, you can send out the special signal of the clan.”

Once Ling Ying said this, his body trembled and began to twist strangely. Finally, it turned into a dark shadow, and quietly merged into the darkness of the room...

Not long after Ling Ying disappeared, Xun Er let out a soft sigh. The strange golden-colored flames in her eyes was slowly withdrawn. Her delicate hand rubbed her face, causing an additional gentleness to appear on her indifferent face. After which, she turned around and walked out of the room.

After Xun Er left the room, her gaze swept in all directions. Finally, it stopped at the peak of the pavilion house before she slowly walked up.

The sky had already gradually turned dark when Xun Er walked to the highest floor. There were a few stars which occasionally flickered, and a pale moon hung in the sky, emitting faint moonlight.

.....

Xiao Yan sat on the northern corner. His hand was playing with an ancient jade piece which emitted a strange glow. Under the shine of the moonlight, the strange lines on the surface of the ancient jade appeared to be breathing. It was bright at times and dim at other times. However, this did not attract Xiao Yan's attention. His gaze was staring intently at an agile light spot which was repeatedly swimming within the ancient jade. This light spot represented the life and death of his father. At such a time, only this light spot that was still emitting a vitality was able to cause Xiao Yan to truly devote himself to training.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge."

The clear voice of a young lady suddenly sounded not far away. Xiao Yan raised his head to take a look and eyed Xun Er who was walking over with a smile. He also stood up.

Xun Er smiled as she walked toward Xiao Yan. However, when her moving gaze paused onto the ancient jade in Xiao Yan's hand due to the light, her walking footsteps suddenly stopped. Shock slowly surfaced on her elegant and pretty face.

"This... this, this is Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade?"

Chapter 481: Tou She Ancient Emperor

Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade?

Xiao Yan frowned slightly when he heard these strange words that came out from Xiao Yan's mouth, and saw the stunned expression on her face. His hand tightly held the cool mysterious ancient jade and said, "You recognize this thing?"

Xun Er inhaled a deep breath of cool air. Her expression was changing rapidly. It was a long while later before she clenched her teeth and swiftly walked to Xiao Yan's side. She said softly, "Xiao Yan ge-ge. Where did you get this from?"

"When the entire clan was moved, the Elders gave me to keep it safe." Xiao Yan eyed Xun Er's strange expression and his frown deepened a little. He asked in a deep voice, "What is it?"

"So it is this thing... the portion of the key which the Xiao clan holds is actually the Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade..." Xun Er's gaze stared intently at the ancient jade in Xiao Yan's hand. A thought in her heart swiftly surged and rolled like flood water. A moment later, she slowly closed her eyes before immediately opening them. The shock in her eyes gradually became calm when she did so.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge do not take this Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade out in front of anyone in the future. Remember. Anyone!" Xun Er held Xiao Yan's hand tightly. There was a solemnness that was never seen before on her face.

"Although there may be extremely few people on this continent who can recognize this thing, if other people were to know that you possess the Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade, I'm afraid that you would immediately invite a fatal disaster. Even... this Jia Nan Academy may attack you out of desire for it." Xun Er's voice was extremely soft, seemingly afraid that there might be someone eavesdropping.

Seeing Xun Er's solemn expression, Xiao Yan's face had also become much more solemn. His hand held this piece of mysterious ancient jade. A

faint cool was emitted from it, causing his heart to remain calm at all times. He nodded and said softly, "Why is this thing called Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade? Isn't it just a symbol of the clan head of our Xiao clan?"

Xun Er nodded slightly and softly said, "After such a long time, there may currently no longer be anyone in the Xiao clan who knows about the background of this piece of jade. Hence, it is only treated as a kind of symbol the clan head passes down from mouth to mouth. Moreover, it is used to store a little spiritual imprint within it, in order to conveniently let the clan members know about the life and death of the clan head."

"What exactly is its history? Hearing you talk in this manner, this so called Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade seems to be an extremely extraordinary thing? Why would it be in our Xiao clan?" Xiao Yan asked in a deep voice.

"It is more than just extraordinary..." Xun Er laughed bitterly in her heart but she shook her head, "Xiao Yan ge-ge. Due to some reasons, I cannot tell you too many things now. Otherwise, it will not have the slightest benefit to you. If you believe Xun Er, then listen to me at this moment. In the future, do not take out this piece of jade in front of anyone!"

Xiao Yan's knit his brows until they formed a line. He eyed the somewhat begging face of Xun Er and his heart softened a moment later. All he could do was sigh and nod. With a flip of his hand, he stored that incomparably mysterious ancient jade into his storage ring.

Xun Er sighed in relief only upon seeing Xiao Yan storing the ancient jade properly. She softly said, "Xiao Yan ge-ge. Keep it hidden. Although this piece of Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade in your hands is incomplete, it still hides an extremely great energy and magical strength. However, until now, the elders in the Xiao clan only researched and found out about the little insignificant ability of storing a spiritual imprint. In the future, it might provide you with a great amount of help."

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. His eyes were shining as he stared at Xun Er. In an instant, the two of them suddenly became quiet.

This silent atmosphere caused Xun Er to feel extremely uneasy. This was especially so under Xiao Yan's shining gaze. A bitter laugh involuntarily surfaced in Xun Er's heart. She sighed, lifted her head and looked directly at Xiao Yan's gaze. Her voice was soft and gentle as she spoke, "Xiao Yan ge-ge. There are some things I hide from you, but trust Xun Er. Those things absolutely do not pose the slightest harm to you..."

"Trust me. As long as Xiao Yan ge-ge has the strength to contend with the Misty Cloud Sect, I will tell you about everything, including the faction behind Xun Er, and its relationship with the Xiao clan."

Xiao Yan's eyes stared intently at Xun Er. A long time later, he slowly nodded. His hand rubbed Xun Er's head, and he said in a deep and soft voice, "Alright, I will wait for the day when you reveal everything to me." Once he said this, he took the lead in turning his body and walking directly down the stairs.

Xun Er once again laughed bitterly as she eyed Xiao Yan's back which had disappeared at the stairs. She clenched her silver teeth and said softly, "Ah, forget it. I don't need to bother about the mission from the clan. Getting me to take away the 'Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade' from Xiao Yan ge-ge hands is something that I cannot do... In any case, there is no one else who knows about this. The people in the clan should likely not be able to guess that it is in Xiao Yan ge-ge's hands."

.....

The faint moonlight scattered into the dark black room, shining into it until it was somewhat dim.

Xiao Yan sat cross-legged on the bed. His spiritual strength completely broke out of his body as his spiritual perception wrapped around the entire room. Every single dark corner within the room was repeatedly searched by it. Such cautiousness continued for over ten minutes before Xiao Yan tapped on the dark black ring. Immediately, a tread of faint glow drifted out and agglomerated into an old figure a moment later.

"Teacher..." Xiao Yan's mouth moved when he saw Yao Lao's figure. The latter waved his hand and voiced his thoughts, "I know that you want to

ask about the matter regarding the 'Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade.' However, even I have only vaguely heard about this thing and have never seen it..."

Xiao Yan was a little disappointed when he heard this. He probed, "Then does Teacher know what exactly is it?"

"I can only tell you that this Tou She Ancient Emperor's Jade is perhaps related to that Tou She Ancient Emperor a thousand years ago..." Yao Lao was silent for a long while before he finally spoke slowly.

"Tou She Ancient Emperor?"

Xiao Yan was startled. He muttered this phrase once again from his mouth. A moment later, he said uncertainly, "It's a person?"

"Perhaps it is not overboard to call him a God." Yao Lao sighed. There was an inexplicable respect in his voice.

Xiao Yan's heart shook. His throat rolled a little. He naturally knew that there was no such thing as a Emperor in this world. If one insisted that there was, then it would be some living being that had trained Dou Qi until the pinnacle stage where they could contend with the Heavens and Earth.

"Don't tell me, he... he was a... Dou Di?"

Xiao Yan's voice trembled slightly when he spoke the last two words. In this continent, no matter who it was, one would involuntarily speak with respect when mentioning this phrase that represented an incomparable and supreme peak.

"Yes."

Yao Lao's spirit also trembled a little at this moment. His low and deep voice reverberated throughout this room, "On the Dou Qi continent, an elite Dou Sheng is perhaps considered to be as rare as a unicorn's horn or a phoenix's feather. However, Dou Di... is something that is extremely difficult to appear. That barrier which cannot be crossed is an enormous barrier which confronts many people with talent so outstanding that even the Heavens and Earth are amazed at. Many can only quietly withdraw.

Putting aside the ancient times that were already lost, in the current era, with the exception of that Tuo She Ancient Emperor one thousand years ago, the continent, according to what I know, has yet to see another appear...”

“Dou Sheng and Dou Di... although they differ by only one level, it was like the difference between the Heavens and the Earth. In so many years, those strong people who had the qualification to stand at the peak of this word ultimately end up failing to get there.”

“The ‘Tou She Ancient Emperor’s Jade’ in your hand is perhaps the rumored item left behind by Tou She Ancient Emperor? Although I am not too certain about its exact use, from the looks of it, it appears to only be a small portion... However, just the name of its owner is sufficient to attract the strong people in the continent to rush over and snatch it. Hence, there is some logic from that little girlfriend of yours not letting you take this thing out in front of anyone.”

Yao Lao’s expression was somewhat solemn. He had never expected that the Xiao clan would actually possess such a mysterious object that could ruffle the entire continent. Moreover, he knew very well just what kind of severe situation Xiao Yan would face if this news was to leak out. The strong people that this thing would attract were not people that the Misty Cloud Sect could compare with. It was likely that even one of those who come would have already reached strengths comparable to when he was at his peak. With Xiao Yan’s strength, he undoubtedly did not have the slightest ability to resist.

“Tou She Ancient Emperor...”

Xiao Yan sighed and laughed bitterly. He suddenly had an illusionary feeling. Originally, what he thought was an ordinary keepsake of the clan was suddenly now something that had a relationship with a legendary Emperor-like person. This seemingly sudden transformation had caused Xiao Yan to feel that it was somewhat surreal.

“I know that the impact of this matter is a little too huge. You can just treat it as though nothing happened today. Only the three of us know

about this matter and I think that it will not leak out. In the future, this Tou She Ancient Jade may perhaps have some benefits to give you. Now, however, your strength is far from being able to come into contact with its profoundness. Hence, just let it quietly stay in your storage ring.” Yao Lao helplessly shook his head and spoke when he eyed Xiao Yan’s expression.

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and nodded. This was all he could do at the moment. However, it was unavoidable for his heart to feel uncertain now that he was suddenly in possession of this kind of great treasure.

“From tomorrow on, you should enter the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ for a retreat and get to the Dou Ling class as soon as possible in order to increase the chances of success of snatching the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ by a little.” Yao Lao smiled and suggested.

Xiao Yan nodded his head. He mused for a moment before his heart became a little relieved. The so called whatever Dou Di was indeed so far away from him that he could not even reach it even if he tried. Now, the most important thing to him was the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ within the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ That thing can give him actual strength. Even if one assumes that this so called Tou She Ancient Emperor’s Jade was something that was left behind by that legendary Tou She Dou Di without discussing the validity of this claim, Xiao Yan did not believe that he would be able to thoroughly understand it after some brief study given that so many ancestors of the Xiao clan failed to do so. Hence, rather than placing his hope on this Tou She Ancient Emperor’s Jade with a use that he was uncertain of, it was better for him to increase his strength and place his thoughts on the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’...

This was a little more reliable and tangible.

Chapter 482: Green Wood Celestial Vine

When Xiao Yan came out of his room the next day, he coincidentally saw Hu Jia and Wu Hao who had returned. Hu Jia was little different from her usual self but Wu Hao's appearance was a little ugly. His face carried little bruises. Despite carrying many injuries on his face, this fighting lunatic appears to have an excited and fanatic expression. When Xiao Yan observed his manner, he saw that there was faintly a little extra aggressiveness and sharpness to it. Clearly, having muddled along at the Fighting Arena for these few days had caused this fellow to gain something.

"Xiao Yan, your level actually advanced?"

When the two of them saw Xiao Yan and sensed his aura that was more mellow and stronger than a couple of days ago, the both of them involuntarily asked in surprise.

Xiao Yan nodded. He stopped in the hall and smiled as he asked Wu Hao, "How is the Fighting Arena?"

"There are many strong people. Moreover, they are the kind of strong people who were honed in true battles. They are far from what those people in the Outer Academy, who only know how to train, can compare with. I was there for four days and fought eight rounds, winning three and losing five. In the end, I still lost nearly twenty days of 'Fire Energy.'" Wu Hao nodded his head. His evaluation of the Fighting Arena was quite high.

"Oh?"

Xiao Yan was slightly shocked when he heard this. Even someone with Wu Hao's strength couldn't maintain a victory rate of fifty percent in the Fighting Arena. It appeared that there were really as many strong people as there were clouds within the Fighting Arena. This caused him to form some interest.

"If you have the time, you can go to the Fighting Arena to try. That is a good place to hone oneself." Wu Hao stuffed a pastry in his hand into his mouth and said vaguely, "During a period after this, I'm afraid that I will

not often go to the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to train. I think that the Fighting Arena is more suitable for me."

Xiao Yan smiled. He was about to speak when he heard the footsteps behind him. When he turned around to take a look, he realized that it was Xun Er who was walking down the stairs.

Xiao Yan smiled at Xun Er. He mused for a moment before speaking, "Coincidentally everyone is present. I shall inform all of you that I plan to go into a retreat within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' for a period of time. During this period of them, I will need to hand over the matters within 'Pan's Gate' to the three of you."

"Retreat?" The three people in the hall were somewhat stunned when they heard Xiao Yan's words. It was awhile later before Xun Er asked, "How long?"

"Until I break through the eight star level." Xiao Yan replied with a smile.

"Ugh? You have broken through to the seven star for only a short while and you are thinking of breaking through again? Even with the help of the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' one would not have such a speed right?" Hu Jia knit her eyebrows and questioned.

"One would indeed not have such a speed in the first or second level. However, don't we possess the green Fire Crystal Card? Ke ke, this thing is sufficient to let us enter into the fifth or even sixth level to train." Xiao Yan said as he smiled.

Wu Hao eyes immediately widened when he heard this. He said, "The fifth or sixth level? Don't you know that each time you descend the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' by one level, the Heart Flame will become increasingly powerful and hot? With your strength as a seven star Da Dou Shi, you would be able to train at the third level at the very most. The fifth or sixth level would require one to be at least a four star Dou Ling and above to withstand it."

Hu Jia by the side also nodded slightly. After getting familiar with the Inner Academy during this period of time, she also knew some of the

information regarding the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’”

“All of you can rest assured that Xiao Yan ge-ge is able to do it. Haven’t all of you seen the large number of unexpected events that occur around him?” Upon hearing Xiao Yan’s words, Xun Er’s reaction was different from Wu Hao and Hu Jia. She merely was a little startled before she immediately raised her teacup with her delicate hand and took a shallow sip before speaking in a soft voice. Her understanding of Xiao Yan was a little greater than the other two. Moreover, she also understood that given Xiao Yan’s character, it was definitely impossible for him to do things that he was not confident of.

Xiao Yan nodded with a smile. The him who possessed the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’ was able to ignore the vigor of the Heart Flame and the corrosion of the Fire Poison. From the other students perspective, these may perhaps be extremely great obstacles in training. However, in front of him, these things would not even delay his footsteps by half an inch.

Seeing that Xiao Yan had already made up his mind, Wu Hao and Hu Jia could only nod their heads.

“During the period where I am in retreat, you should all pay a little more attention to the ‘White Gang.’ That Bai Cheng does not appear to be a magnanimous person. I think that even with that half a year agreement, it is likely that he will quietly play some little tricks.” Xiao Yan furrowed his brows slightly when he mentioned Bai Cheng. That dark and evil fellow kept causing people to feel uneasy in their hearts.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, you can be at ease and undertake your retreat. When you come out, you will see an even stronger ‘Pan’s Gate.’ As for that Bai Cheng, if he really wants to cause obstruction secretly, he cannot blame us for not following the rules of the Inner Academy.” Xun Er nodded and spoke with a faint smile.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. With Xun Er in charge, Xiao Yan would naturally be able to completely be at ease. He did not really view a single Bai Cheng too seriously.

“That’s right. Is there any place in the Inner Academy that one can

obtain various medicinal ingredients or Monster Cores?” Xiao Yan gulped down the tea in his teacup at once before suddenly asking.

“Medicinal ingredients? Monster Core?”

Xun Er mused for a moment before nodding. She said, “The eastern region of the Inner Academy is a trading area. There are many different strange objects being sold there which include many medicinal ingredients. These things are those that the students of the Inner Academy found by themselves deep in the mountains. However, you will need ‘Fire Energy’ if you want to purchase them.”

After remembering the location in his head, Xiao Yan patted his buttock and bid the three others goodbye before he left the new student residence area. After which, he walked all the way to the eastern region of the Inner Academy Xun Er had mentioned. This time around, his retreat would last for a long time. Moreover, in order to display the best effect during the training, he also needed to prepare some things.

The size of the Inner Academy was extremely vast. Xiao Yan had to spend a total of half an hour to get from the new student residence area to the eastern area of the Inner Academy. However, it was fortunate that this so called transaction area within the Inner Academy could be considered to be a popular place. Therefore, there were always people coming and going along the road that led there such that Xiao Yan did not get lost.

Half an hour later, Xiao Yan paused outside an extremely vast plaza. There were quite a number of stone tables set up within the plaza. At these moment, there was a dazzling assortment of various items being placed on these stone tables. The squeezing crowd was bustling outside these stone tables. The great popularity of this place caused Xiao Yan to be a little speechless.

The surrounding noisiness nearly caused Xiao Yan to lose his bearing when he walked into this enormous trading area. He twisted his body and squeezed into the human crowd. His gaze repeatedly swept over the items on those stone tables. As his gaze swept over them, the surprise in his heart increased. He realized that some of the things that were sold here

were actually not the slightest bit inferior to some of the large cities in the 'Black-Corner Region.' Perhaps it was because the Inner Academy was itself located deep within the vast mountains, but some of the rare items among those on the stone tables were things that one would have difficulty seeing in some of the shops within the 'Black-Corner Region.'

After Xiao Yan felt an astonishment in his heart, he began to search for the medicinal ingredients which he needed. The things that he needed were not to refine some high tiered medicinal pill. Hence, it was not too difficult to find them. After spending one hour to scour for treasures and spending nearly thirty days of 'Fire Energy,' he had nearly obtained all the medicinal ingredients he needed.

Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly as he eyed the 'Fire Energy' on the green Fire Crystal Card which had greatly shrunk. He originally thought that over a hundred days of 'Fire Energy' was considered quite good. He did not expect that it could not endure his spending.

After sighing over his spent 'Fire Energy' within his heart, Xiao Yan decided to leave this noisy place. However, his body had just turned when Yao Lao's voice suddenly sounded in his heart, "Little fellow. The eighth stall in front of you. Go over there and take a look."

Xiao Yan was startled when he heard Yao Lao speaking suddenly. He immediately turned his head around somewhat uncertainly and threw his gaze to the eighth stall in front of him. However, he was a little stunned to realize that the originally squeezing human crowd appeared to be void from that spot. Some students who had passed through this place swiftly leaped pass the area like a rabbit.

Xiao Yan carried some doubt within his heart as he lifted his footsteps and squeezed into the human flow as he walked over to the somewhat special area.

As he approached that area where the human flow was cut, his eyes moved along the stall and took a glance, only to see that there was a pale grey clothed man seated cross-legged behind it. His eyes were tightly shut as he ignored the surrounding human crowd. That manner of his did not

appear to be like someone who had come out to sell things.

“This person... his aura is very strong. I’m afraid that even Bai Cheng cannot match him. It appears that he is another expert on the ‘Strong Ranking.’ Although his aura is very strong, it is filled with a kind of fiery and violent hostility. It appears that this fellow’s temper is not very good.” By relying on his sharp Spiritual Perception, the aura of the gray robed man was still unable to escape Xiao Yan’s senses despite the latter having kept it hidden very well. A strange thought immediately flashed across Xiao Yan’s heart as he sensed the aura.

Xiao Yan’s gaze shifted from the gray-robed man to the stone platform as he slowly swept over it.

As Xiao Yan’s gaze swept across him, the shock he felt in his heart become increasingly dense. There were quite a number of Monster Cores of various elements being displayed on the stone table. Moreover, these Monster Cores were around rank four. A Magical Beast of such a rank was sufficient to be a match for an elite Dou Ling. It was really unexpected that this person had taken out so many of them at once.

Xiao Yan shook his head as he sighed in shock. His continuously moving gaze suddenly stilled. A low and soft shocked voice sounded in his heart as his eyes stared at an item in the middle of the stone table.

The thing that attracted Xiao Yan’s gaze was a dry vine that was around half a foot long. The vine was an emerald green color, much like a good piece of jade. There were faint natural lines being drawn on it. It was wound up like a meandering green snake. The strangest thing was that this dark green dry vine still emitted a strange scent that caused one to feel refreshed. Looking at this point, one would know that this thing was not ordinary.

“This is?”

Although Xiao Yan was able to know that this thing should be the rarest item on the stone table by just looking at its appearance, he was unable to identify what it was with just his knowledge.

“Green Wood Celestial Vine!” Yao Lao faint laughter contained a joy

that was difficult to hide.

“Green Wood Celestial Vine?”

Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. Immediately, his heart shook and joy quietly swarmed onto his face.

Green Wood Celestial Vine. One of the necessary items to refine the ‘Ground Spirit Pill.’ It was really unexpected that he would be so lucky to find it here. It must be said that his luck was at its limit!

Chapter 483: Strange Fellow

Xiao Yan suppressed the joy within his heart and squeezed out of the human flow. He slowly walked toward this somewhat special stone table. Upon seeing his action, the surrounding human flow involuntarily halted their footsteps. The gazes which they used to look at Xiao Yan appeared to contract a playfulness of watching the fun.

Xiao Yan's footsteps stopped in front of the stone platform. His eyes shot to that Green Wood Celestial Vine. After hesitating for a moment, his hand extended toward it.

“Chi...”

Just as Xiao Yan's hand was about to touch that Green Wood Celestial Vine, a sharp wind suddenly rushed through the air toward him. The strength of the wind even caused the hair on Xiao Yan's hand to stand up in shock.

Xiao Yan knit his eyebrows as he sensed the sharpness of the force. A thought passed through his heart and green-colored flame immediately surged out from within the Acceptance Spirit. After which, it swiftly moved passed a few Qi Paths before it suddenly broke free from his body and swiftly wrapped around his withdrawing hand.

“Huh?”

The instant Xiao Yan's hand was wrapped by the green-colored flame, a surprised exclamation suddenly sounded. That sharp wind was immediately annihilated.

After successfully withdrawing his hand, Xiao Yan lifted his head to eye the gray-robed man in front of him. At this moment, the latter had already opened his eyes. His face carried shock as he eyed Xiao Yan. When Xiao Yan's gaze swept over the other person's eyes, he was slightly startled as he saw that the other party's eyes were actually filled with a strange red glow that was mixed with some ferocity.

Xiao Yan was not unfamiliar with this kind of red glow. As long as one

trained for a long time within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' such a condition would appear. Normally, this was called Fire Poison invading one's body. However, there was merely a little bit of red glow within the eyes of those people whom he had seen a couple of days ago. On the other hand, the fellow in front of him... the entirety of his eyes appeared to be filled with the red glow. Clearly, the Fire Poison had invaded deep into his body... Such a serious invasion of Fire Poison in one's body was the first one that Xiao Yan had seen until now.

"If you are not buying, don't just randomly touch." The gray-clothed man blinked his red eyes as he coldly glanced at Xiao Yan. After which, he spoke faintly as withdrew his fingers placed together, appearing like a knife.

Xiao Yan was a little amused by this attitude of the gray-clothed man. He shook his head helplessly within his heart. Now, he finally understood why the people around shunned this fellow. The buyer was actually nearly attacked when he took a look at the merchandise. Regardless of how high rank the items that he displayed were, it was likely that there was hardly anyone who dared to purchase them.

"Who said that I am not buying?" Xiao Yan crossed his arms in front of his chest, and replied in a similarly indifferent tone.

"Don't pay me lip service. If you want to buy, you can take out the 'Fire Energy' to buy it. Debating here and there and wasting time." An irritable feeling flashed across his reddened pupils. The gray-clothed man's hand suddenly slammed on the stone table as he spoke angrily.

"The invasion of the Fire Poison into his body is actually this serious... even his mind has been affected by it." Xiao Yan was unconcerned about the angry rebuke of the gray-clothed man. His face became slightly solemn. It was really unexpected that the Fire Poison within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' was actually this strong. It appeared that he should be even more careful when he trained in the future even though he had the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' protecting his body.

"How much does this green vine cost?" Xiao Yan pointed at the strange

Green Wood Celestial Vine and asked faintly. From how the other party had placed it in the most eye-catching spot, one could understand that this fellow actually knew the rarity of this thing. Hence, there was likely going to be some difficulty if Xiao Yan wanted to carelessly obtain it like in the past.

“Four hundred days of ‘Fire Energy.’” The gray-clothed man replied in a cold voice.

The moment the gray-clothed man said these words, the entire area suddenly became quiet. The gaze which each of them used to look at one another was like that in which they used to look at a lunatic. Four hundred days... this kind of large number was something that some people were likely unable to obtain in an entire year or even two years. Was this fellow’s big appetite not a little overboard? Although they could also see that this green vine was a little unique, there would definitely not be some who believed that it was worth four hundred days of ‘Fire Energy.’

Under this kind of sky-high price, forget about the surrounding observers, even Xiao Yan also involuntarily twitched his mouth. Four hundred days... this fellow...

“I’m afraid that it is a little expensive, no?” Xiao Yan swallowed the breath that was choked in his chest before speaking with a frown.

“Although I do not know what exactly this Green Wood Celestial Vine is, two Dou Wang class Magical Beasts fought to death over it. That is sufficient to prove its worth. Moreover, in order to obtain it, I nearly threw away my life. Therefore, four hundred days of ‘Fire Energy’ is not expensive. If you are really unable to afford it, please leave. Don’t disturb me doing business.” The gray-clothed man glanced at Xiao Yan and replied before waving his hand.

Although the gray-clothed man spoke easily, these words of his still caused the crowd around him to be somewhat shaken. Snatching something from the hands of two Dou Wang class Magical Beast. This fellow... was indeed worthy of being the craziest person in the Inner Academy.

Some similar surprise also flashed in Xiao Yan's eyes. The gaze which he used to look at the gray-clothed man had an additional seriousness. Xiao Yan asked himself and knew that if he was to completely rely on his own strength, he did not have much confidence in successfully snatching this kind of unique object from the hands of two Dou Wang class Magical Beast. This fellow in front of him might be arrogant and wild, but he did indeed have the means to do so.

"Can you change it to something else? For example exchanging another item for it? I am unable to take out four hundred days of 'Fire Energy.'" Xiao Yan hesitated for a moment. The Green Wood Celestial Vine was a key ingredient in refining the 'Ground Spirit Pill.' Moreover, if he wanted to successfully swallow the 'Fallen Heart Flame,' the 'Ground Spirit Pill' was something that was indispensable. Hence, no matter what happened, he must obtain all of the necessary medicinal ingredients and Monster Cores needed to refine the 'Ground Spirit Pill' in his hands before he obtain the 'Fallen Heart Flame.'

The number of medicinal ingredients needed to refine the 'Ground Spirit Pill' may not be large, but all of them were extremely rare items. Take for example this Green Wood Celestial Vine. If he was to let it slip by today, Xiao Yan did not know just exactly when will he find it again. Therefore, he would naturally not easily give it up.

"Yes you can. I need Dou Techniques. Di class ones. Do you have any?" The gray-clothed man did not hesitate with regards to Xiao Yan's suggestions. He opened his mouth and changed his demands. However, this price once again caused Xiao Yan and the surrounding students to be a little speechless. Di class. It was likely that there were not many students within this Inner Academy who had a Dou Technique of that class.

Of course, Xiao Yan did indeed possess a kind of Di class Dou Technique. Moreover, it was an Agility type Dou Technique. However, this technique was also something that he needed to practice but did not have the time to do so. Asking him to use it to exchange for the Green Wood Celestial Vine caused him to feel as though it was cutting into his flesh.

Xiao Yan's face was volatile as it continued to changed rapidly for

awhile. Under the focus of the surrounding gazes, he shook his head and slowly said, "I am also unable to take out a Di class Dou Technique..."

The gray-clothed man glanced at Xiao Yan with disdain. He was too lazy to even say anything as he directly shut his eyes once again and ignored Xiao Yan.

Seeing Xiao Yan being humiliated, the surrounding people involuntarily emitted low laughter. They felt that Xiao Yan's action of bringing himself grief was funny.

"He does indeed have a strange temperament...." Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly. He ignored the laughter around him and did not simply just leave. After standing for a long while in front of the stone table, a thought suddenly shook his heart. His gaze slowly swept over the body of the gray-clothed man.

Around two minutes after Xiao Yan's gaze swept across the gray-clothed man, a powerful force that contained some anger suddenly surged out of the gray-clothed man's body. Under the sweeping of this powerful force, the expressions of the surrounding students observing the situation drastically changed as they hurriedly stepped back.

"This fool is going to be out of luck. He actually infuriated that crazy Lin Yan..."

"He deserves it. He clearly knows that that fellow has the worst patience in the entire Inner Academy yet he actually dares to dawdle. Isn't he asking for a beating?"

"But this fellow seems to be quite familiar..."

On top of stepping back, the surrounding students involuntarily felt some resentment for being implicated into the mess. At that moment, complaints and ridicule sounded.

Under the powerful fury of that gray-clothed man, Xiao Yan's expression also changed slightly as he took a step back. His heart was slightly shaken. From just looking at this Qi, it appeared that the strength of this fellow was likely above that of a seven star Dou Ling.

The fellow's tightly shut eyes were once again slowly opened. Those reddened pupils of his contained violence and anger. He eyed Xiao Yan and asked in a dark and cold voice, "Are you asking for a beating?"

"I don't wish to fight. However, I have quite a bit of interest in this green vine." Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders and laughed softly.

"Get out of the trading area in one minute." The gray-clothed man inhaled a deep breath of air. His voice contained some suppressed anger and violence as it shook.

"I don't have four hundred days of 'Fire Energy, and I don't have a Di class Dou Technique..." Xiao Yan rubbed his head, feeling vexed. However, before all of his words sounded, the aura of the gray-clothed man completely erupted. The latter suddenly stood up. In an instant, he appeared in front of Xiao Yan. Both of his eyes turned red as the sharp wind of his fist nearly tore through the air. There was a faint pale red fist shadow along the path which his fist was swung.

The aggressive force which came toward Xiao Yan caused his expression to change. His body, however, remained straight as his dark black pupils eyed the pair of eyes that had been corroded by Fire Poison. A calm voice was slowly emitted, "However, I can help you expel the Fire Poison in your body..."

"Chi..."

The first which was wrapped by a faint red Dou Qi suddenly stilled just when it was around two inches in front of Xiao Yan's face. Along with the stiffened fist, was the shocked face of the gray-clothed man.

"You... what did you say?" The bright redness in his eyes dimmed slightly as the gray-clothed man opened his mouth and asked in a somewhat trembling voice.

Xiao Yan's finger gently touched the fist in front of him. After which, he slowly put it down. Xiao Yan directly looked at this man who appeared to be quite strong within the Inner Academy and said indifferently, "I will help you expel the Fire Poison in you and you give me this green vine. What do you say to this transaction?"

The expression of the gray-clothed man changed intensely when he once again heard Xiao Yan's voice.

Xiao Yan was unconcerned about the clash within the gray-clothed man's heart. He inserted his hands into his sleeves and quietly waited for the other party's reply.

This area in the noisy trading area had descended into a temporarily silence. Those numerous gazes shot at Xiao Yan's body while carrying some shock. This fellow had actually subdued the craziest person within the Inner Academy... it was really somewhat unbelievable.

Chapter 484: A deal

The shock on the gray-clothed man's face continued for quite awhile before it slowly became fainter. He coldly looked at Xiao Yan and questioned, "Why should I believe that you have such ability? I once let quite a number of elites within the Alchemist Department check out the Fire Poison within my body, but all of them said it is not possible to dispel it. On what basis can you do it?"

"The depth in which you are afflicted with the Fire Poison is indeed the first time I have seen such a case." Xiao Yan glanced at the face of the gray-clothed man where fury had once again surfaced. He continued on indifferently, "However, do you have any other choice now? Perhaps you yourself might have already sensed that the Fire Poison is currently quietly eroding your sense of reasoning. If it continues like this for a long time, I'm afraid that you might become a powderkeg that will explode at the slightest contact."

The expression of the gray-clothed man changed slightly. These words of Xiao Yan had indeed hit the deepest part of his heart. The man hesitated for a moment before he tightened his fist and slowly turned it away from Xiao Yan's front. He said in a deep voice, "Who exactly are you? If you really have the confidence to expel the Fire Poison in my body, you should likely not be a nobody."

"New student Xiao Yan." Xiao Yan smiled and answered as he cupped his hands toward the gray-clothed man.

"Xiao Yan? He is the leader of that 'Pan's Gate,' Xiao Yan?" When Xiao Yan's words sounded, a ripple naturally rose from around him. Most of the Inner Academy students had heard of the matters regarding 'Pan's Gate' and Xiao Yan during this period of time.

"Xiao Yan? I seem to have heard this name before... It is of that fellow who finished off all of the older students during the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' right?" The gray-clothed man mused for a moment before shock immediately flashed across his face as he eyed Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan ignored the numerous strange gazes around him as he smiled and nodded.

“Most of those who participate in the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ are useless people. It is not surprising that you defeated them... you are an alchemist?” The gray-clothed man did not give any face toward those older students who participated in the Hunting Competition. In the end, he still could not help but use a somewhat doubtful tone to ask Xiao Yan.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan flicked his finger. A wisp of green-colored flame appeared on the tip of his finger. “I think that while it is not something absolute, being able to summon out an essence flame at the Da Dou Shi class should be able to prove my status, right? If you don’t believe me, I can let you take a look at my alchemist robe.”

The gray-clothed man stared at the wisp of green-colored flame. Some shock flashed across his eyes as he sensed the high temperature being emitted before he spoke, “This flame of yours is indeed a little stronger than the ones those fellows in the Alchemist Department. I believe you. But... even if you can expel the Fire Poison within my body, it seems that just taking away that green vine, which is obviously extraordinary, with just a cure is a little...”

When he spoke until this point, the gray-clothed man smiled. “Why don’t we do it like this. If you can really completely expel the Fire Poison in my body, this green vine will be yours if you add a hundred days of ‘Fire Energy’ on top of it. What do you say?”

Xiao Yan lifted his eyebrows. He eyed the man in front of him and his gaze stared at the eyes filled with a red glow. It was really unexpected that this man, who appeared to be hot-tempered, would actually have this profiteer side to him.

“I am not adding...” Xiao Yan shook his head indifferently. He said in a manner as though nothing had happened, “It does not matter to me if you agree with this deal. Although I need this thing, it is not as though I must get my hands on it now. As for the Fire Poison in your body, if you continue to delay treating it, I think that even an alchemist grandmaster

will be helpless. If you are unwilling, then we can forget about it...”

“You are threatening me?” The gray-clothed man frowned and spoke in a deep voice.

“The truth is just as I have said. I can delay but you can’t. Hence, you can forget about your luxurious dream of adding other prices. This is because you are at a disadvantage. Of course, if you are one of those kind of people who view death as going home, I can only admit that I am unlucky. However, from the looks of it, it doesn’t appear that you are someone like that...” Xiao Yan ridiculed.

“You...” The gray-clothed man was slightly dull. He clenched his teeth and violently nodded a moment later. He said fiercely, “Alright, I agree to your terms. As long as you can completely expel the Fire Poison within my body, this green vine will be yours. However, you should remember that it has to be completely expelled! If I sense that there is still Fire Poison residue remaining at that time, forget about obtaining the green vine. I’m afraid that you will still have to suffer the pain of the flash.”

Xiao Yan smiled slightly. He flicked his sleeves, turned his body and walked out of the trading area. Seeing him walking over, the congested human flow hurriedly parted and formed a path.

The gray-clothed man behind him turned around and squeezed all of the things on the stone table into his storage ring as though he was throwing garbage around. After which, he swiftly followed Xiao Yan.

.....

“How long has the Fire Poison been accumulated within your body?” Xiao Yan frowned and asked the gray-clothed man seated in front of him within a quiet room. Before he helped the latter expel the poison, he needed to clearly inquire about the latter’s condition.

“Around one and a half years or so...” When he mentioned this, the gray-clothed man’s expression became ugly. However, when he remembered that the person opposite him was the alchemist that would help him expel the poison, he could only swallowed the irritation in his heart as he replied, “During that period of time, I anxiously needed to raise my

strength. Hence, I continued to undertake a retreat within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.' Moreover, my retreat was one to two months at one go. The Fire Poison continued to accumulate in this matter. In the end, when I discovered it, the Fire Poison had already firmly intertwined itself with my Dou Qi and cannot be separated."

"That's right, I am called Lin Yan. You can directly call me by my name."

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He stared at the reddened eyes of Lin Yan. It was a long while later before he withdrew his gaze. After musing for nearly seven to eight minutes, he slowly said, "The depth of which the Fire Poison has accumulated in your body had somewhat exceeded my expectation... if you don't wish to die, you better be quiet. I did not say that it cannot be cured."

Before Xiao Yan had completed the first part of his sentence, Lin Yan on the opposite side slapped the table with reddened eyes as he immediately scolded angrily. This fellow's temper actually gave one a headache.

"Hmph. Don't beat around the bush when you speak to me... in any case, I don't care. Only once you have successfully helped me expel the Fire Poison will I give you the green vine." Although he sat down after being chided by Xiao Yan, Lin Yan still rubbed his nose and snorted.

Xiao Yan shook his head with a bitter smile. He said, "Since the Fire Poison is too deep, it is clearly an impossible task to expel it all at once. Hence, I can only adopt a gradual method."

"How slow will it be?"

"This is an 'Ice Spirit Pill.' It can temporarily suppress the Fire Poison within your body and cause it to be unable to erode your reasoning. Remember, take one every day. There are a total of fifteen of them which is enough for you to consume them for half a month..." Xiao Yan took out a jade bottle from his storage ring and placed it on the table.

Lin Yan swiftly grabbed the jade bottle and poured out one of the pills with some doubt. The snow-white round medicinal pill emitted a faint coldness. Seeing this, joy flashed across Lin Yan's face as he stuffed it into his mouth.

As the 'Ice Spirit Pill' entered his body, it gradually transformed into an icy-cool feeling, causing the red glow in Lin Yan's eyes to quietly weaken a little.

The weakening of the Fire Poison was naturally most clearly felt by Lin Yan. Immediately, there was some conviction in the gaze he used to look at Xiao Yan.

"Of course, the 'Ice Spirit Pill' can only suppress it and cannot totally expel it..." Xiao Yan fondled his chin and mused for a while once more. Suddenly, he waved his hand and a medicinal cauldron appeared on the table. He muttered, "Looks like I have to put in some effort..."

"Go and guard the door. Don't allow anyone to come in and disturb me. I need to refine some things." Xiao Yan waved his hand at Lin Yan and commanded.

Lin Yan was startled when he heard this. Even Lin Xiuya, Yan Hao, and those extremely strong people did not have such courage to open their mouths and ask him to guard a door... However, after thinking about the Fire Poison in his body, Lin Yan smacked his mouth and could only helplessly nod his head. He honestly stood up and went out before closing the door.

Seeing that Lin Yan had did as he was told and left, Xiao Yan finally turned his gaze to the medicinal cauldron in front of him. He flicked his finger and a wisp of green-colored flame shot into it. Finally, it turned into a raging flame that rose within the medicinal cauldron.

As the fire increased the temperature of the medicinal cauldron, Xiao Yan took out over ten medicinal ingredients from his storage ring. Finally, he took out a Monster Core that was emitting a faint cold air and placed it among the medicinal ingredients.

"I must really put in some capital if I want to obtain the Green Wood Celestial Vine..." Xiao Yan pursed his mouth and shook his head as he eyed the rank three Ice Affinity Monster Core that he had bought earlier. The sum of all of the medicinal ingredients would at least reach around one hundred and fifty thousand gold coins. However, Xiao Yan could only

bear the pain of this loss for the Green Wood Celestial Vine.

There were quite a number of things that needs to be refined this time around, but they did not need overly precise control. Hence, in the hands of Xiao Yan, whose refining level had already reached that of a tier four alchemist, not too much time would be wasted.

While the green-colored flame writhed, the medicinal ingredients on the table were thrown into the cauldron one after another. Around ten minutes later, the lone Ice Affinity Monster Core on the table was also thrown into the medicinal cauldron.

As it was shrouded by the raging flame, an ice-like snow-white liquid became suspended above the green flame. As it rolled, threads of cold air began to rise. They intertwined with the flame and turned into a substantial white fog that rose out from within the medicinal cauldron.

Xiao Yan's eyes stared directly at the snow-white liquid emitting a cold air. After the liquid was grilled by the flame for another few minutes, Xiao Yan's face slowly relaxed. He flicked his finger and the cover of the medicinal cauldron automatically fell off. With a wave of his hand, a suction force drew up the snow-white liquid in the cauldron, forming a graceful arc. Finally, it was accurately poured into a jade bottle on the surface of the table.

Xiao Yan heaved a long sigh of relief as he stared at the jade bottle which was filled with cold liquid. He smiled, waved his hand and stored the medicinal cauldron on the table. Only then did he face the door and open his mouth. He said indifferently, "Come in."

Hearing Xiao Yan's voice, Lin Yan, who had become impatient from waiting in front of the door, hurriedly pushed it open and entered. He looked at Xiao Yan with a face filled with anticipation. "Are you done?"

"Yes."

Xiao Yan nodded. He threw the jade bottle on the table to Lin Yan. The latter hurriedly rushed to catch it.

"This is the 'Marrow Washing Cold Spirit Liquid.' Drop one drop in a

large basin filled with clear water. After that quietly sit and train within it for half an hour. Do it once every day until the liquid is completely used up. At that time if there is still remnant Fire Poison, I will help you refine it again. Remember, you cannot go the the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to train during this period of time. Otherwise, these medicinal effects will be lost." Xiao Yan reminded.

"Alright."

Lin Yan was somewhat excited as he held the jade bottle. He faced Xiao Yan and spoke with a smile, "As long as you can expel the Fire Poison within my body, I, Lin Yan will owe you a favor."

"I am not too interested in your favor. It is fine as long as you remember to hand me the green vine at that time." Xiao Yan waved his hand. After which, he walked out of the door, "I will now go to the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to undertake a retreat. It is likely that I will take quite a while. There is no need for you to look for me during this period of time."

"Hei, alright..." Lin Yan nodded. He eyed Xiao Yan's back and suddenly spoke with a smile, "Little fellow, I will help take care a little of that 'Pan's Gate' of yours during this period that you are training. With I, Lin Yan, around, don't mention the crappy 'White Gang.' Even Lin Xiu Ya's 'Wolf Teeth' will not dare to do anything to 'Pan's Gate.'"

Xiao Yan paused his footsteps. A smile lifted at the corner of his mouth as he nodded slightly.

"In that case, thank you very much Senior Lin Yan..."

Chapter 485: Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment, Swift Wind Spirit Pill

After parting ways with Lin Yan, Xiao Yan hurried to the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' located on the northern side of the Inner Academy. The doors to the tower had long been opened by this time. Thus, it saved him some waiting time.

Xiao Yan did not stay in the first level for long after he entered the tower. Instead, he directly went to the second level. Perhaps it was because there were more people training during the day, but all the high and middle grade training rooms in the second level were occupied by others. Seeing this, Xiao Yan, who originally intended to head directly to the third level, mused for a moment and randomly searched for a small-sized low grade training room.

This low grade training room which Xiao Yan had found was the smallest kind of size. It could only accommodate one person within it. Moreover, from the looks of the dust that had accumulated within the training room, it was obvious that it belonged to the category of those rooms which people seldom used. After all, the Heart Flame within this kind of training room could not even be compared with some of the middle grade training rooms on the first level. Therefore, an ordinary person would not purposefully come to this kind of training room unless there was really no other place to train.

However, Xiao Yan's intention of searching for this kind of single person training room was not for the sake of training. He merely wanted to find a quiet place to refine some medicinal pills he needed for his retreat.

After entering the training room, Xiao Yan shut the door tightly. He did not enter that extremely small black stone platform. Instead, he sat cross-legged on the ground. With a wave of his hand, the medicinal cauldron which had just entered his storage ring a short time ago was summoned out once again.

Xiao Yan slowly closed his eyes after placing the medicinal cauldron in

the proper position. He began to search the medicinal formulas that Yao Lao had given him... five minutes after he shut his eyes, the former opened them. A faint joy was contained in his eyes.

“Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment. The ingredients needed to refine it are a Three Leaves Green Ganoderma, Fire Lotus Fruit, Thousand Spirit Grass, Fire Affinity Monster Core...”

“Swift Wind Spirit Pill. The ingredients needed to refine it are Rapid Dragon Saliva, Night Spirit Leaf, Wind affinity Monster Core...”

Although the tier of both kinds of medicinal pills were not very high, they belonged to the species with extremely unique effects. The rarity of these kinds of unique medicinal formulas did not lose to that of a Sonic Dou Technique among the Dou Techniques .

The first kind, the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment, could be rubbed on one’s body when one trains and allowed a person’s skin to be extreme sensitivity to natural fire energy and possessed a unique suction strength. After rubbing this kind of ‘Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment,’ even if one did not voluntarily circulate one’s Qi Method to absorb energy, the fire affinity energy between the Heavens and the Earth would still be towed and unceasingly pulled into one’s body automatically. Of course, this kind of Fire Spirit Ointment also had one kind of drawback. It would cause the person who applied it to their skin to feel a numb and itchy feeling. If it was a person who did not have a firm mind, it was likely that the person would not be able to maintain their training state, much less absorb energy.

The second kind of medicinal pill, the Swift Wind Spirit Pill, was even rarer. It would allow a person to increase the circulation of Dou Qi within their body upon consumption. This was like adding a wild gale to a windmill, causing its circulating self to circulate much fiercer and faster. However, everything had its rules. This kind of increase in the circulation of one’s Dou Qi was like an overdraft. Once the increase in the Dou Qi speed lasted for a while, the inside of one’s body would descend into a sluggish period. If one were to meet an enemy during this period, it was likely that one would only be able to unleash half of one’s strength.

The effects of the two kinds of medicinal pills were strange. Under normal circumstances, it was likely that not many people would pay attention to them. However, for the current Xiao Yan, they were extremely useful things. In this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,' the fire affinity energy was so rich that it left one speechless. With the help of the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment, his absorption speed would undoubtedly be raised by a few folds.

Moreover, if the speed of circulation of Dou Qi could suddenly become faster when the Heart Flame rose in his body, it would undoubtedly increase his training speed... Hence, it was not an exaggeration to say that these two kinds of medicinal pills were currently the things that Xiao Yan needed the most.

The tier of these two medicinal pills was not very high. Although the coordination of the various ingredients was a little strange, refining them was merely a problem of time to Xiao Yan with his current alchemist skills.

After he revised the degree of merging and the control of the fire to refine the first kind of medicinal pill within his heart, Xiao Yan flicked his finger. A wisp of green flame once again shot into the medicinal cauldron. The raging intense flame immediately caused the temperature of the training room to climb by quite a bit.

Xiao Yan sat cross-legged in front of the medicinal cauldron. He waved his hand and a pile of various medicinal ingredients appeared on the ground. His eyes stared intently at the flame in the middle of the cauldron. The green-colored flame was reflected within his dark black eyes. The dark black and green color mixed, appearing somewhat strange.

Xiao Yan's body did not move even a little. His expression was serious. Occasionally, he would wave his hand and a skillful wind would wrap around the medicinal ingredients on the ground and throw them into the medicinal cauldron one at a time, repeatedly undergoing refining and merging...

The first refinement lasted for a total of nearly half an hour. Only then

did it gradually end. When Xiao Yan stored a large cluster of extremely viscous red-colored paste into a jade bottle, the refinement of the first kind of medicine, the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment, was successfully completed.

.....

After the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment was successfully refined, Xiao Yan did not start refining the second Swift Wind Spirit Pill. Instead, he swallowed an energy recovery pill and chose to sit cross-legged to recover his Dou Qi. Although refining the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment did not consume a lot of Dou Qi, this habit had become second nature. Xiao Yan always liked to refine medicinal pills in his best condition. Being in his best condition allowed his Spiritual Perception and his degree of flame control to be in their peak states. If he refined medicinal pills at such a moment, it was undoubted that his success rate would reach its highest level.

Xiao Yan sat cross-legged and merely rested for over ten minutes before he opened his eyes with a face that revealed a faint red glow. He sensed the slightly stronger Dou Qi in his body after undergoing one round of refining medicine and involuntarily smiled. With a wave of his hand, the green-colored flame once again rose within this training room.

Perhaps it was because the Swift Wind Spirit Pill needed to be formed into a pill shape, hence the time needed for its refinement was nearly twice that of the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment .

Over an hour later, Xiao Yan suddenly opened his tightly shut eyes. His eyes were shining as he eyed the flame rising within the cauldron. As the flame curled up, one could even vaguely see the outline of a few partially visible rounded medicinal pills.

Xiao Yan exhaled a breath of air. He flicked his finger gently and a wisp of wind shot out, opening the cover of the cauldron. He beckoned with his hands and a few pale green-colored medicinal pills flew out from within the cauldron. Finally, they were sucked into Xiao Yan's palm.

Xiao Yan opened his palm. Five thumb-sized pale-green-colored

medicinal pills that contained some warmth lay within it. A faint medicinal fragrance was emitted from them. When he inhaled this medicinal scent, Xiao Yan sensed that the speed of the Dou Qi flowing within the Qi Paths of his body increased slightly.

“Hee hee, they are indeed effective.”

A joy involuntarily flashed across Xiao Yan’s face as he sensed the increased circulation speed of Dou Qi in his body. He took out a jade bottle from within his storage ring and carefully threw the medicinal pills into it. After doing all of this, he stored the medicinal cauldron in front of him into his storage ring. He then patted his buttocks and stood up.

“I have already prepared the things I need. Now, let’s enter the third level and prepare to undertake a retreat to train...” Xiao Yan muttered in his mouth. He arranged his clothes before pushing open the door and walking out.

After exiting the training room, the coming and going human flow appeared before Xiao Yan’s eyes. He hesitated for a moment before pulling a student walking past in front of him, and inquired about the direction in which one could descend to the third level.

Having suddenly been pulled by someone, the student felt somewhat impatient and angry. However, when he heard Xiao Yan’s question, he involuntarily shut his mouth. One would need at least the strength of a three star Da Dou Shi in order to enter the third level to train. He weighed Xiao Yan up and down before courteously pointed in the north-west direction.

Xiao Yan voiced his thanks before he opened his stride and swiftly walked in the north-west direction. After nearly ten minutes, a spiral staircase that was similar to the entrance to the second level appeared in front of him. However, there were two men who were clearly instructors, standing at the area by the staircase. Xiao Yan saw that the students who entered it had to take out their own Fire Crystal Card before they were allowed to enter.

Doubt flashed across Xiao Yan’s heart. As he slowly walked nearer, the

two instructors glanced at him. One of them said in a faint voice, “If you want to enter into the third level to train, you need to possess a blue-colored Fire Crystal Card, and a strength above that of a three star Da Dou Shi.”

“So, they are inspecting...”

Xiao Yan came to a sudden understanding when he heard the words of the instructor. He took out his green Fire Crystal Card before handing it over.

“Green Fire Crystal Card?” Seeing the crystal card in Xiao Yan’s hand, surprised voices were immediately emitted from the mouths of the two instructors. Immediately, they eyed Xiao Yan with astonished expressions.

“Can I enter?” Xiao Yan smiled and asked when he saw the astonished manner of the two of them.

“The green Fire Crystal Card is sufficient to enter into the sixth level to train. It is naturally qualified to enter the third level.” An instructor smiled and nodded. There was an additional politeness in his smile. No matter what kind of status one had, it was easy for a person who had great strength to receive courteous treatment from others.

Xiao Yan received the green Fire Crystal Card that the instructor returned and cupped his hands toward the latter. After which, he entered the spiral staircase and disappeared in front of many envious gazes...

“Tsk tsk, having obtained a green Fire Crystal Card at such an age. This is the first time that I have seen such a thing in many years.” The instructor earlier could not help but say in a surprised manner.

“That’s right... but looking at his aura, he appears to be still at the Da Dou Shi class. Why would he possess a green Fire Crystal Card?” The other instructor was somewhat uncertain. There was no more than fifty students within the Inner Academy who possessed a green Fire Crystal Card. Those people who had the qualification to possess it were mostly the experts on the ‘Strong Ranking,’ and their strength were at the Dou Ling class.

“It seems like a few new student representatives this year obtained the reward of a green Fire Crystal Card by Elder Su?” The instructor by the side hesitated for a moment before he suddenly spoke.

“Uh... then that little fellow earlier... don’t tell me he is the person whom the First Elder instructed to give special care to... Xiao Yan?”

“It seems... to be so?”

The two instructors at the entrance to the third level looked at one another while feeling at a lost. A long while later, they finally nodded and smiled bitterly.

Chapter 486: Retreat

Xiao Yan clearly sensed his surroundings suddenly become much quieter after entering the third level. He lifted his head and eyed the pathway which was somewhat deserted when compared to the second level. He suddenly came to an understanding. It appeared that there was still only a small portion of students within the Inner Academy who had the qualification to enter the third level.

If one were to say that the students training on the first and second levels belonged to the basic level of the Inner Academy, the third and fourth levels should belong to those whose strength were at the middle level. The potential of this group of students was extremely great. They could become a member at the peak at any time. As for the students who could enter the fifth and sixth level, they were mostly people who had stepped into the peak level within the Inner Academy. They were a group of strong people who were most respected within the Inner Academy.

As this thought flashed across his heart, Xiao Yan had some gauge of his strength. He laughed bitterly. The strong people were indeed as numerous as clouds within the Inner Academy... Xiao Yan sighed in this manner within his heart. His gaze swept in all directions before slowly walking along a path and entering the level.

The layout of the third level and the second level were about the same. Hence, Xiao Yan did not waste too much time. He searched for the high, middle and low grade areas. The low grade area was naturally a grade abandoned by him. His footsteps paused for a moment when he passed through the middle grade training ground. Xiao Yan stood in front of an empty middle grade training ground and hesitated for a moment. A ruthless expression immediately flashed across his face. He did not enter it. Instead he lifted his foot and walked toward the high grade training room...

What kind of bitterness and difficulty had Xiao Yan not experienced when training? By relying on his own strength, he had contended with the Misty Cloud Sect which had dominated the Jia Nan Empire, and had even

killed the First Elder of the other party. How many of those blessed by the Heavens within the Inner Academy had such battle results?

Xiao Yan did not possess any fear even when facing the Dou Zong Yun Shan. Therefore, he did not believe that he would be forced to become a good-for-nothing from a group of students that were of similar age to him within this Inner Academy.

Xiao Yan stepped forward with his feet, and walked into the high grade training area. Immediately, numerous gazes that contained partially visible enmity were shot over from all directions. Xiao Yan ignored these gazes. His similarly cold and indifferent gaze slowly swept around him. His shoulders shook, and the force of a seven star Da Dou Shi was completely unleashed. It was like a storm that came sweeping out.

Sensing the powerful force that erupted from within Xiao Yan's body, some of the expressions of the students in the high grade area involuntarily changed a little. When they looked at Xiao Yan once again, there was an additional seriousness within their gazes. In this Inner Academy where the strong were honored, acting timidly would cause others to look down on you. If one wanted to obtain the respect of others, one needed to display a strength that would cause others to give one respect!

Xiao Yan was expressionless. He slowly walked deep into the high grade training room area. His gaze moved across the training rooms one at a time.

There were a few more high grade training rooms on the third level than on the second level. Xiao Yan had counted them. There was a total of thirty-eight of them. Among these training rooms, there were those that could accommodate the training of twenty people, and those that could only allow one person to train.

Xiao Yan's gaze swept past these high grade training rooms. There were many training rooms where a tag, which represented that someone was using it, was hung. However, Xiao Yan was not in a hurry. His footsteps slowly moved to the deeper areas.

When his gaze was about to shift away from the last area of the high grade training rooms, his gaze suddenly stopped. He eyed that training room where an 'empty' tag was hung and quietly sighed in relief. After which he swiftly walked into it.

Xiao Yan walked to the entrance of the high grade training room and touched the door gently with his hand. His eyebrows were slightly lifted. This door, which appeared to be an ordinary wooden board from afar, actually faintly emitted threads of cold air. His finger gently knocked on it and it emitted a clear strange sound. This sound did not ring like one emitted by wood. Instead, it was like a kind of metal.

"It looks like this is designed in such a fashion because the Inner Academy is worried that the people training inside would be disturbed should someone suddenly kick open the door and enter, resulting in some accident during the training." Xiao Yan felt the toughness of the door as he heard that low and deep sound. He sighed in relief within his heart. Since this was the case, he no longer needed to worry that someone would forcefully charge in and interrupt his training should he reach a critical point in his training.

Xiao Yan gently pushed open the door, and slowly walked through the doorway. After which, he shut the door tightly.

The moment he closed the door, Xiao Yan, whose back was facing it, naturally did not notice the shock and ridicule that some of those students strolling leisurely around this place had in their eyes when they saw that he had chosen this training room.

.....

Xiao Yan shut the door tightly after entering the training room. After which, he began to observe his surroundings. This training room was clearly meant for a single person to train. In the middle spot of the training room, there was a black stone platform that could only accommodate two people seated cross-legged. Moreover, there were tables and chairs etc. placed in other areas. There was even a bed that was prepared in the furthest corner of the training room.

“The treatment of the high grade training room in the third level is indeed a little better than that of the two levels above...” Xiao Yan clicked his tongue and praised when he saw these facilities within the training room. He walked toward the black stone platform and finally sat down crossed-legged on it.

As Xiao Yan’s buttocks touched the black stone platform, a faint warmth entered into his body, causing his bones to have a sort of lazy feeling.

Xiao Yan flicked his hand and a green Fire Crystal Card appeared in his palm. He took a look at the number on the Crystal Card: one hundred three. In just a short span of less than seven days, the ‘Fire Energy’ on this Crystal Card had shrunk by one third. This kind of depletion rate really caused Xiao Yan to feel ashamed.

“If I am to continue squandering like this, I’m afraid that the remaining ‘Fire Energy’ will not support me for very long...”

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and shook his head. He inserted the Fire Crystal Card into the notch in front of him. A faint glow flashed. That number one hundred three immediately changed to one hundred.

“As expected. Each time one descends by one level, the ‘Fire Energy’ that is needed increases by one day...” Xiao Yan sighed when he saw the number that was reduced on the Fire Crystal Card. This third level requires ‘three days’ of ‘Fire Energy’ to train for one day. This ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ was really a glutton that would not be full no matter how much one fed it.

“Since I have already paid the fee, won’t it be a pity if I don’t train to recuperate it?” Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders, and took out two jade bottles from his storage ring. He removed his black robe, revealing his naked body that appeared somewhat skinny but hid an explosive strength.

Xiao Yan picked up the jade bottle containing a dark-red-colored paste like item. He flipped his hand and a jade piece appeared in it. After which, he used it to pry out a cluster of red-colored medicinal paste from within the jade bottle.

“I wonder just how itchy it will be when the Green Ganoderma Fire

Spirit Ointment is spread on my body? I'll just go all out..." Xiao Yan's eyes stared intently at this cluster of red-colored medicinal paste. A moment later, he clenched his teeth violently and threw it onto his naked chest. After which, he used the jade piece to spread it apart as he rubbed it all over the upper half of his body.

As the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment wrapped around his body, Xiao Yan's entire body became stimulated and alert. He could clearly feel that his senses toward the fire affinity energy in the training room had suddenly become extremely sharp. He did not even need to use his Spiritual Perception. When he shut his eyes, he could faintly see the repeatedly drifting pale-red-colored energy within the training room...

"It is indeed useful!" Xiao Yan's heart immediately rejoiced when he sensed this kind of change. The joy had yet to spread to his face when the corner of his mouth suddenly stilled. Quickly following this, he clenched his teeth tightly together, and tiny dense perspiration instantly covered his forehead.

"This... is this the side effect of the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment... it is indeed numbing and itchy!" Threads of cold wind were released from Xiao Yan's mouth from between his tightly clenched teeth. He could sense that his skin at the moment felt like it was filled with ants crawling over it. That numb and itchy feeling caused Xiao Yan, who was unprepared, to nearly exit from his training condition.

Xiao Yan inhaled a few deep breaths of air. He clenched his teeth tightly together and placed the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment in his hand down. After which, he grabbed a jade bottle and poured out a pale-green-colored, round medicinal pill from it.

Xiao Yan opened mouth and flicked the medicinal pill into it. After which, he shut his teeth tightly once again.

Not long after the Swift Wind Spirit Pill entered his mouth, it transformed into a somewhat agile and pure energy that moved along his throat, rolling and flowing downward. After which... the Dou Qi circulating within his Qi Paths appeared to be like a wild bull that had

suddenly consumed some medicine as it began to circulate wildly.

As he sensed the strange sound emitted by the Dou Qi within his body due to the fast circulation, Xiao Yan's hands formed the training seal. He slowly shut his eyes. After over ten minutes of adaptation, he finally entered into his training condition.

When Xiao Yan entered his training condition, one could see the fluctuations that had suddenly appeared in the training room. Waves of fire affinity energy agglomerated out of thin air. After which, they even agglomerated into waves of somewhat substantive pale-red energy... these substance-like pale-red energies whizzed and circulated over Xiao Yan's head. After which, they appeared to receive a certain suction force as they wildly smashed into Xiao Yan's naked body.

The smashing of the energy did not cause Xiao Yan's body to quiver. Instead, the energy appeared to have fallen into a bottomless pit, and was swallowed by Xiao Yan in an extremely strange manner.

As the first wave of energy moved, those countless energies circling above Xiao Yan's head suddenly began to collide with Xiao Yan in an unceasing manner.

An extremely strange scene appeared within the training room. Due to the energy that was pouring in being too large, Xiao Yan's body, which was seated cross-legged on the black stone platform, was completely wrapped in circular pale-red energy ball of light.

The intense energy fluctuations were like ripples that began to swiftly spread within the training room. In the middle of these ripples was Xiao Yan, who was seated cross-legged on the stone platform!

At this moment, Xiao Yan was like a bottomless pit that was emitting an endless suction force, completely swallowing all of the extremely rich fire affinity energy within the training room.

If other people could see that nearly frightening swallowing, it was likely that they would be so shocked that they would stare at it with stunned looks created from their eyes and mouth.

Chapter 487: Trouble That Knocks On The Door

A half-naked young man within the spacious training room had his eyes tightly shut. Dark-red energy circled and flew by, finally violently crashing against his naked body. It immediately disappeared in a strange manner.

The green-colored Dou Qi that was within the spacious Qi Paths in his body was like a car whizzing past on an expressway. Under the focus of his mind, it carried a low humming sound that repeatedly reverberated and spread within his body.

After consuming the Swift Wind Spirit Pill, the circulating speed of the Dou Qi in Xiao Yan's body was basically increased by nearly three to four times at this moment. Waves of green-colored powerful Dou Qi shot out from the Dou Crystal. They ran quickly through the Qi Paths with strange muffled sounds.

Due to the fast rate of circulation, the cycle within Xiao Yan's body eventually achieved a stage where the start and the end were connected. Dou Qi had just left the Dou Crystal from one side when Dou Qi that had been refined by the Heart Flame poured turbulently back into it on the other side.

Moreover, other than the Dou Qi that the Dou Crystal emitted, the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment that was spread on Xiao Yan's body had also become a bottomless pit that was repeatedly emitting a suction force. Pale-red energy that was visible to the naked eyes seeped in endlessly from the pores of the skin. Finally, it once again gathered into an extremely impressive large amount of energy.

The fire affinity energy within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' was clearly much purer than that of the outside world. However, it could not be directly incorporated into the Dou Crystal. Hence, Xiao Yan had to separate a large portion of his mind to carefully control the fire affinity energy that had barbarically charged in, and began circulating it through another Qi Path.

Of course, this Qi Path's destination was near the heart flame which meant that after being purified by the Qi Path, the fire attribute energy with a bit of impurities would be plunged into the vibrant heart flame.

The Dou Qi within his body was just like two small rivers that were flowing independently. When the small rivers flowed to the place where the Heart Flame was at, they would undergo refinement. The two rivers would then converge and completely merge into pure powerful Dou Qi. The final river carried a low rolling thunder-like sound as it poured into the Dou Crystal within the vortex.

Under this kind of two prong absorption and refinement, Xiao Yan could clearly sense that the Dou Crystal was gradually filling up with Dou Qi...

Borrowing the aid of the Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment and the Swift Wind Spirit Pill, everything was progressing in the most perfect direction. According to this kind of speed, Xiao Yan had the confidence that within a month's time, he would break through to an eight star Da Dou Shi.

Xiao Yan's training continued for two days. No one would willing halt this kind of training where one could clearly sense their strength growing. This was because this kind of pleasure from growing caused people to feel a kind of thrilling comfort that was emitted from deep within the spirit.

Of course, Xiao Yan may not want to break from this kind of nearly perfect training condition, but due to various outside factors, his intention of quietly training fell apart.

The training continued until the afternoon of the second day when the originally somewhat noisy third level training area had suddenly become a little quiet due to a group of people charging in.

The leader of this group of unwelcomed guest was a lady wearing a snow-fox cashmere dress. The lady had a beautiful appearance. She had a melon face, small cherry mouth, drawing-like eyebrows and watery big eyes. The combination of all of these would cause people around to have a pleasant aesthetic feeling. Therefore, one also did not feel strange that there was always a group of people surrounding her. After all, females

were the minority within the Inner Academy. Beautiful ladies were all the more sought after by everyone.

TL: Melon face – long face

No matter where one was, a beauty would always easily be sought after and favored.

Being surrounded by people, with her at the middle, like a moon being surrounded by stars, this fox cashmere-dressed lady may have a sweet and calm smile on her face for now but one could still see self-satisfaction and vanity within her eyes. This kind of self-satisfaction was the true evaluation that people had about her after going past the aura that the lady exerted from her body.

Vanity was always the thing that a woman could not resist. A woman's heart would involuntarily feel quiet and self-satisfied when she watched so many men fighting because of her.

After she entered the high grade area, this lady's pupils gently drifted toward the men whose footsteps had paused because of her. Under her gentle water ripple eyes, the faces of some of the mentally weak people involuntarily reddened. After which, their eyes hurriedly avoided her.

Seeing the gazes of these males students becoming evasive under her watch, the lady laughed softly. Her beautiful smile suddenly caused this sealed interior of the tower to become much brighter.

The lady led a group of people as they directly passed through the high grade area and finally stopped at the last area at the end. The spot where their footsteps were halted was the single training room that Xiao Yan had chosen to train in.

Seeing the female footsteps coming to a halt, the gazes that swept over from the surroundings were involuntarily startled when they saw that the door was tightly shut and on it hung a tag which stated that there was someone training in it. Immediately, a gloating look appeared in their eyes. Did the fellow inside not know that this training room was dedicated for snow fairy Liu Fei's use?

The snow-fox cashmere-dressed lady's footsteps came to a stop. She eyed the tightly shut training door and surprise similarly flashed across her face. Having her training room being occupied by others was something she had not encountered for a long time. The last time she encountered it seemed to be half a year ago? However, when that fellow who occupied her training room was eventually beaten by her suitors until he could not even get out of bed for half a month, there was seldom anyone in the Inner Academy who dared to come to this training room. It was really unexpected that she actually met this kind of thing that people yearned for.

"Ke ke, Fei-er, looks like we have to meet some people who did not open their eyes..." A large-sized man behind the lady had a smile on his face as he eyed the tightly shut door. This was undoubtedly a good chance for him to put in an appearance in front of the beauty.

Liu Fei smiled faintly as she shook her head slightly. In a soft voice, she said, "Lei Na, be a little courteous to other people..."

Hearing some hidden meaning within Liu Fei's voice, the man called Lei Na parted his mouth and smiled with a nod. He said, "Be rest assured that I will only let him understand something. Big Brother Liu Qing said to let me protect you. You are her younger cousin sister. I will naturally not let you suffer even a small grievance."

Hearing Lei Na speak that renowned name within the Inner Academy with some reverberance, Liu Fei could not help but smile. There were some emotions that others around her had difficulty sensing flashing across her eyes. That domineering and sharp man had left an extremely deep shadow in her since they were young. Although there was an endless stream of suitors flocking around her after she followed him to enter the Jia Nan Academy, all of these people could not help but appear to be eclipsed when compared to his shadow.

Lei Na slowly walked closer to the training room. He tightly clenched his metal fist and heavily smashed on the door. Immediately, a clear metal sound resounded across this area.

The sound lasted for nearly two minutes before it gradually disappeared. The tightly shut door, however, did not have any movement.

Seeing the lack of movement within the training room, Liu Fei's eyebrows were slightly knit together. Lei Na's expression also became slightly gloomy. He lifted his fist once again and was about to violently smash it down when a cracking sound appeared in the tightly shut door as it slowly opened.

"Hmph." Seeing that the room was finally opened, Lei Na let out a snort and withdrew his fist. He took a couple of steps back as his gaze stared into the training room with ill intentions.

As the room's door was opened, all the gazes in this area were swiftly shot over.

Under those numerous gazes that contained various different emotions, the black-robed young man slowly walked out from the training room with a gloomy expression. No matter whose training was disrupted, that person would not have a good expression. He lifted his head and eyed Lei Na who had stepped back. He frowned slightly and coldly asked, "What are you intending to do?"

"Brat, are you new?" Lei Na smiled as he gave Xiao Yan an inclined glance. He said, "Don't you know that other people are not allowed to use this training room?"

"I have looked at the rules of the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' before I came in. There was nothing on it that says that no one is allowed to touch this training room." Xiao Yan shook his head and replied extremely seriously.

Lei Na choked and became dull at Xiao Yan's reply. He said with a cold smile, "You have guts to actually treat me as amusement."

"I am not so free..." Xiao Yan finger flicked his sleeves gently as he replied faintly, "If there's nothing else, please give way. Don't disrupt my training." As he said this, he turned around, intending to enter and continue his training.

“Please wait.”

A lovely voice that suddenly sounded caused Xiao Yan to pause slightly. He lifted his gaze and looked at the snow-fox cashmere-dressed lady with eyes that were ordinary. From the moment he had come out earlier, he understood that this lady was perhaps the main source of trouble.

Liu Fei involuntarily became a little stunned as she was indifferently stared at by Xiao Yan. This was because the gaze the former used to look at her not only did not have a little of the evasiveness and adoration that other men had when they looked at her, but it also did not possess even the pure admiration of something beautiful. The expression in those eyes appeared to not have the slightest difference between looking at her and those surrounding men.

“Is something the matter?”

“This student, this training room is my personal training ground, I’m sorry...” Liu Fei recovered and knit her eyebrows slightly. There was some displeasure in her heart toward this attitude of Xiao Yan. However, her face still carried a smile as she said softly.

When he heard Liu Fei’s words, Xiao Yan knit his eyebrows tightly. A long while later, he pointed at the training room and said, “Is this a special treatment that the Inner Academy gives you? Do you have a proof that comes from the Inner Academy? If this training room is really built by the Inner Academy just for you, I will apologize to you for my usage earlier.”

Xiao Yan somewhat cold, faint laughing words slowly reverberated throughout this high grade training area. Under these words of his, some of the people who had come with the intention of seeing the show were involuntarily startled. They immediately sighed with some pity.

Liu Fei’s face, which was originally filled with a sweet smile, had also slowly become ugly at this moment.

Chapter 488: Liu Fei

Under Xiao Yan's cold and indifferent words, Liu Fei's expression gradually became ugly. Letting the Inner Academy construct a training room just for her? If these words were to be spread, it was likely that a large group of people would laugh to death. With the Jia Nan Academy's position in the Dou Qi continent, forget about her being only a student that could be considered to have outstanding talent, even her older cousin brother Liu Qing, who could be considered to be quite renowned within the Inner Academy did not possess such a qualification. Therefore, these words that Xiao Yan had spoken were undoubtedly full of ridicule directed at her.

The entire area had become quiet under Xiao Yan's words. There was a secretly surging pressure of a storm in the atmosphere, covering the area outside this training room.

Lei Na by the side had also recovered from Xiao Yan's words. His expression immediately became so dark and solemn that it was frightening. His gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan while his somewhat hoarse voice containing suppressed anger shouted, "Brat, you've got guts!"

"Don't you know the rules? Before you issue a challenge, you must press the challenge bell outside the training room. Are you trying to show that your strength is great by using your might to knock on the door like a barbarian?" Xiao Yan lifted his eyes. A faint coldness flashed across his dark-black pupils. His finger pointed at a black-colored button not far beside the door as he said in a dark and cold voice.

Although whoever had the harder fist within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' would get to enjoy the best training conditions, if someone had entered the training room to train earlier and there was someone else who wanted to join after that, one must first press the challenge bell outside of the training room. In addition, one must insert one's Fire Crystal Card into it before pressing this challenge bell and one day worth of 'Fire Energy' would be deducted.

As long as there was someone who pressed the challenge bell, the person training inside the training room would gradually sense the Heart Flame decrease. As the Heart Flame weakens, the person training would be able to exit from his training condition without encountering any trouble. This was a protective measure that the Inner Academy had in place for the person training. However, Lei Na had clearly ignored the so-called challenge bell earlier, and instead chose the method easiest to shock a person in his training condition awake: Forcefully banging the door!

Although the Inner Academy had used a special material to manufacture the door, if one used such large force to knock at it, the ear-piercing sound that would be created would still pose a disruption to the person training inside and even force him to exit his training condition.

This was the reason why Xiao Yan's expression was dark and solemn when he came out earlier. It was also why his words were a little bristly.

Lei Na was dull as he was being reprimanded by Xiao Yan in this manner. The fury on his face became even denser. As he was used to being domineering normally, he had seldom bothered about these rules. Moreover, from the way he looked at it, how strong would a person that was training on the third level be? It was due to this that he directly ignored the challenge bell and used the most barbaric, yet the most effective method to wake the person training inside.

Lei Na pointed pointed at Xiao Yan. He ended up laughing due to his extreme anger, "Good, you do indeed have some ability... my hands have been itchy for a few days. I can relax my muscles and bones properly today." As Lei Na's voice fell, a powerful force surged out explosively from within his body. The intense pressuring force caused some of the students by the side to involuntarily take a couple of steps back.

"Around that of a four star Dou Ling. A little stronger than Fu Ao..." Xiao Yan was expressionless as he sensed the force from within Lei Na. His heart, however, had determined the other party's strength.

The expression of Liu Fei at the side had finally recovered a little. She did

not open her mouth to stop Lei Na when she saw that he had taken this step toward Xiao Yan. In all these years, she had not been bullied so much. Today, this soft nail known as Xiao Yan had actually pierced her until she felt pain. Hence, she was naturally happy to see someone teach him a lesson.

“Big Brother Lei Na, don’t strike too hard. Otherwise, elder cousin will blame me at that time.” Liu Fei glanced at Xiao Yan indifferently as she spoke to Lei Na.

“Hee hee, alright.” Lei Na smiled and nodded. Immediately, he turned his head and gave Xiao Yan a savage smile. The powerful Dou Qi on his fist swiftly agglomerated.

Seeing that a fight was about to break out at this spot, the surrounding people hurriedly stepped back as they feared being implicated.

Xiao Yan’s expression had once again become much gloomier as he coldly eyed the savage smile on Lei Na. He gently inhaled a breath of somewhat hot air and said coldly, “You really want to fight?”

“Are you afraid?” Lei Na smiled and continued, “Immediately get out of this training room and apologize to Fei-er. Moreover, you are not allowed to enter this high grade training area in the future. I can let you go if you agree to this.”

Xiao Yan lowered his eyes slightly after hearing this. He quietly nodded, shook his hand and a purple-colored medicinal pill was stuffed into his mouth. He slowly began to quietly and gently chew it.

“Hei, brat, you want to consume a medicinal pill to forcefully raise your strength?” Seeing Xiao Yan’s action, Lei Na involuntarily laughed coldly. There was some disdain in the smile on his face. He could sense that Xiao Yan’s aura was around that of a Da Dou Shi and would not be able to endure even ten exchanges with him.

Xiao Yan ignored him and widened his mouth. A purple flame was spat out and he held it in his palm.

“Hm?” Lei Na was startled when he saw the Purple Flame in Xiao Yan’s

hand. He immediately frowned slightly and coldly laughed, "It seems that you have some strength. No wonder you are so arrogant. However, you are still lacking if you want to just rely on this thing to defeat me."

Xiao Yan still ignored him. He slowly opened his right hand and a green-colored flame suddenly shot out.

Eyeing Xiao Yan who was holding the Purple Flame with one hand and the Green Flame with the other, some shock finally flashed across Lei Na's eyes. Although he was an arrogant person, he was not a fool. The heat that was emitted from these two kinds of flame was sufficient to cause him to quietly begin to view them seriously.

"I cannot delay any longer..." A thought flashed across his heart. Lei Na's body shook slightly. A deep-yellow-colored energy that was visible to the naked eye surged out. Finally, it wrapped completely around his entire body.

"Brat, today, I shall tell you that if you want to survive in the Inner Academy, it would be best that you keep a low profile!" Lei Na's cold laughter was suddenly emitted from the yellow-colored energy cluster. His feet immediately stomped heavily on the ground as his body became like a huge Magical Beast on a rampage, carrying a fierce pressuring wind as he violently charged at Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan coldly watched Lei Na come charging over. The powerful wind that blew at him caused the black robe to press tightly on his body. Lei Na's body was swiftly becoming enlarged in those dark-black eyes. Xiao Yan face became colder. The green and purple flame held on his hands abruptly collided together heavily.

The moment the flames collided, Xiao Yan's footsteps slightly shifted one step to the left and coincidentally completely dodged Lei Na's attack.

Lei Na's feet heavily rubbed on the ground. He did not turn his head around. He flipped his body and a whipping leg that shook the air until it emitted a thunderclap noise was swung ruthlessly toward Xiao Yan's head.

Xiao Yan's hands were tightly pressed together. The green and purple flames in his hands were intertwining with each other swiftly. Fire

seedlings were like sparks that repeatedly hissed and appeared. As he sensed the sharp wind that shot toward his head, Xiao Yan's body abruptly vibrated. His slightly shaking leg stepped gently on the ground. In an energy explosion, Xiao Yan, who was slightly inclined from the ground, swiftly pulled back under this force.

Lei Na's feet stomped on the ground and his body leaped into mid-air. After which, his hands turned into claws. Like a fierce eagle diving on its prey, they swiftly dove toward the retreating Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan used one leg to step on the rock wall behind him. Using the reverse force, he once again dodged this fierce attack of Lei Na. On top of dodging it, the corner of his eyes swept toward the flame in his hand. The green and purple flames had already gradually merged. As long as he had a moment for, the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' would be formed. It would also be able to hurt the enemy!

The current him did not need any protracted fights. In order to avoid troubles in the future, he needed to use absolute strength to let himself possess a deterring reputation. Otherwise, there would be an endless stream of people who would interrupt his training in the future!

The deterrent that the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' would create was more useful than any other thing!

Lei Na's claws heavily landed on the ground. The sharp force on it directly caused threads of crack lines to form on the tough black rock surface.

In just a short period of less than two minutes, they had over ten exchanges with one attacking and one defending. The sharp force and the flashing human figures caused the surrounding observers to involuntarily exclaim in surprise. The first reason they had had exclaimed was because of the viciousness of Lei Na's attack while the second was because Xiao Yan was actually able to endure for such a long time in Lei Na's hand with just the strength of a Da Dou Shi. It should be known that this fellow was an elite four star Dou Ling. Even in the entire Inner Academy, there would not be more than a hundred people that could beat him.

“R-r-i-i-p-p!”

Another fierce attack came once again. This time around, Xiao Yan, who was a little slower, had a corner of his black robes viciously torn by Lei Na. Fortunately, his body was not injured.

Seeing the attack which he had planned deliberately for a long while being dodged, the fury on Lei Na's face became deeper. He raised his head and mocked Xiao Yan who was repeatedly dodging, “Don't tell me you are a rabbit? If you have guts, fight me head on!”

Upon hearing Lei Na's words, some of the students observing around them could not help but laugh quietly. You use the strength of a Dou Ling to bully a Da Dou Shi and still ask the other person not to dodge? Did he really think that other people are fools?

However, just as the observing students around them were quietly laughing, Xiao Yan, whose body had been moving swiftly, really came to a stop. A delicate and handsome face was filled with a coldness at this moment. Those dark-black pupils were coldly watching Lei Na opposite of him.

Lei Na immediately rejoiced upon seeing that Xiao Yan had actually listened to him and ceased dodging. His feet violently stomped on the ground and his body shot out in a sudden explosive manner.

Xiao Yan watched Lei Na shooting explosively toward him in an indifferent manner. His body did not make the slightest movement as his hand was slowly lifted. He flicked his palm and a green-purple fire lotus the size of one's palm was suspended on it.

Following the appearance of the green-purple fire lotus, the space around Xiao Yan's palm began to suddenly form waves of fluctuating motion. Everyone looked over, only to see that the space there had become distorted. Immediately, they were stunned.

Lei Na, who was shooting explosively toward Xiao Yan, similarly discovered the unusual phenomenon that the fire lotus in Xiao Yan's palm brought. A shocked expression swiftly drew past his face. He could vaguely sense just what kind of frightening strength was contained in that

fire lotus.

“This is bad... given his strength, how can he display this kind of terrifying Dou Technique?” A thought flashed across Lei Na’s heart. In his shock, his feet hurriedly rubbed on the ground. Both of his hands blasted out a force in front of him, using the reverse force from it to let his forward charging body finally come to a stop. After which, he used both of his legs to hurriedly pull back.

“Bang!”

Xiao Yan’s gently stepped forward after indifferently eyeing Lei Na. As it fell, an energy explosion was emitted from under his feet. Immediately, Xiao Yan’s body turned into a vague black shadow. It was like black-colored lightning as he instantly appeared in front of Lei Na. His expression was cold as he used the fire lotus in his hand to ruthlessly smashed at the latter’s head.

The green-purple fire lotus was swiftly enlarged in Lei Na’s eyes, shining upon his distorted face where shock and horror were coexisting.

Chapter 489: Elder He

Xiao Yan's face was cold and indifferent. The green-purple fire lotus in his hand ruthlessly smashed toward the shocked and horrified face belonging to Lei Na. From the looks of the ferocious force, it was evident that the former did not have any intention of showing mercy.

“Stop!”

However, just as the fire lotus was merely around two feet from Lei Na, an old low cry was suddenly transmitted from a distance. Since the strength of the Dou Qi contained in the cry was strong, it resulted in the eardrums of the students in this area to be shaken until they felt a pain.

Xiao Yan's face changed slightly when he heard the cry. A thought swiftly flashed across his heart. Xiao Yan forcefully stilled his vicious smashing hand in mid-air. Even though this was the case, the high temperature on the fire lotus still incinerated Lei Na's hair into a pile of ashes in an instant.

“Chi!”

The moment that Xiao Yan's palm came to a stop, an extremely powerful force abruptly flashed over from the mid-air. However, it was not directed toward Xiao Yan. Instead, it heavily shot onto Lei Na's body. Immediately, under this ferocious force, Lei Na's body was like a kite with its string severed. He rolled a couple of times in mid-air before heavily smashing into the wall. Immediately, he spat out a mouthful of fresh blood, dying the dark-black floor a dark-red color.

With Lei Na, who was in front of him, sent flying with one blow, Xiao Yan had lost his target. He could only slowly straighten his body while his palm dragged a green-purple fire lotus the size of a palm. He followed the gazes of everyone present and turned toward the source of the cry.

At the end of the well lit passageway, a few human figures had come flashing over. The person in front was clearly an old man. His speed was swift. Everyone had merely seen his body performing a few leaps and flashes when he appeared at this place where the incident had occurred.

“Elder He! Why was he disturbed? He even came out?”

Seeing the appearance of this old man whose body was a little hunched, some of the expressions of the observing students involuntarily changed. They cried out involuntarily. These tower guardian Elders had an extremely high position within the Inner Academy. They would usually not show themselves in situations where a fight broke out between students. It was really unexpected that the highest person-in-charge of the third level would actually make an appearance today. This caused these students to involuntarily feel some surprise.

Not long after the old man flashed and appeared, four to five human figures quickly appeared after him. The few of them were the instructors within the tower. They had hurried over because they had similarly sensed the frightening energy fluctuation here.

“What are you doing?” The sharp gaze of that somewhat hunched old man looked all around him as he coldly cried out.

The surrounding students all had their mouths tightly shut when they heard the question of the old man. The prestige these Elders had within the Inner Academy was something that could not be infringed upon. One would be in for suffering if one offended them.

“Elder He, why would we disturb your elderly self? There is only ordinary sparring going on here.” A somewhat sweet lovely voice broke the silence. It was actually Lui Fei who had swiftly walked forward and spoke with smile toward Elder He.

“An ordinary sparring? If I had come a little later, I’m afraid that a life might be lost!” Elder He coldly chided. He turned his gaze and stopped it on Xiao Yan’s body. When his gaze swept toward the purple-green fire lotus on Xiao Yan’s hand, his eyes suddenly shrunk. He could sense the frightening energy contained within that fire lotus.

“Little fellow, can you resolve that fire lotus in your hand? I will uphold justice for the incident here.” Elder He took one step toward Xiao Yan before he stopped. Within this range, he would be able to instantly come to the rescue in the event of any unexpected situation.

“I will do as Elder orders.” Xiao Yan hesitated for a moment after hearing Elder He’s words. After which, he nodded. He clearly knew the strength the Elders possessed within the Inner Academy. Naturally, he was unwilling to easily offend them.

Xiao Yan’s right hand covered the green-purple fire lotus suspended in his palm. Spiritual Strength came surging out and invaded the flame, splitting the tight connection of the fire energy within. With the great increase of his current strength, Xiao Yan’s control over this ‘Angry Buddha Lotus Flame’ had also reached a higher degree of proficiency. In the past he could not even grasp the merging portion, but he was now in possession of the ability to withdraw and release it as he pleased.

The erosion generated by the Spiritual Strength caused the green-purple flame to form an intense undulation. Upon seeing the fluctuation of the flame, Elder He’s face immediately became much more worried. His shriveled hands were curled slightly like an eagle claw and a sharp Dou Qi was partially visible in his palm, ready to act any moment.

However, it was fortunate that the worst case scenario Elder He expected did not appear. After the green-purple flame fluctuated a little, they gradually became illusionary. A moment later, they disappeared into thin air on Xiao Yan’s palm.

Seeing that the frightening flame had finally disappeared, Elder He quietly sighed in relief. His tense body also slowly became more relaxed.

“Little fellow, you are Xiao Yan, right?” On top of sighing in relief, Elder He looked up and down and sized up Xiao Yan. He recalled the frightening fire lotus from earlier and surprise flashed across his eyes as he asked Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan was slightly startled. He did not expect that even this Elder He had heard of his name. Immediately, he hurriedly nodded. “This little one, Xiao Yan, greets Elder He.”

“Ke ke.” Elder He smiled and nodded. The cold, sharp expression of Elder He became much gentler when facing Xiao Yan. He asked, “What happened here?”

“Elder He, you know that this training room is a place that Fei-er frequently uses. Today, it was forcefully occupied by this person. Big Brother Lei Na is merely helping Fei-er seek justice. However, it was really unexpected that this person was so ruthless in his attack. If Elder He had not shouted earlier, I’m afraid that Big Brother Lei Na would have lost his life here.” Hearing Elder He inquire about the entire story, Liu Fei hurriedly took a step forward. Her pretty face had some grievances as she explained what happened.

She had trained on the third level for a long period of time, therefore, Liu Fei and Elder He had met a couple of times before. Moreover, due to the beauty of the former, Elder He was extremely warm toward her when they spoke to each other occasionally. She naturally had some intentions of having Elder He punish Xiao Yan now that she had opened her mouth to speak first.

If this occurred during ordinary times and involved an ordinary student, Elder He might give the former a dressing down on account that a man should not argue with a woman. However, the offender today was Xiao Yan. The First Elder had mentioned this person by name and wanted all of them to take care of this student. Hence, Liu Fei’s hope clearly would result in her being disappointed.

Sure enough, after hearing Liu Fei’s narration, Elder He simply rolled his eyelids faintly and ignored her. He merely swept his gaze toward Xiao Yan and smiled as he said, “Xiao Yan, why don’t you describe what happened.”

Seeing that Elder He actually ignored her, that Liu Fei was involuntarily startled and immediately stepped back bitterly. She clearly knew the strength of these Elders. If it was her elder cousin here personally, the Elder might still give him some face. However, with her ability and training talent... she could only save the effort.

Xiao Yan glanced indifferently at Liu Fei, the wicked person who was the first to swing accusations. A cold smile that he did not hide drew passed his face. He cupped his hands toward Elder Liu and described all that had happened earlier in detail from the start to the end. Due to there being numerous spectators, Xiao Yan did not exaggerate anything, but merely

told the truth of the story.

Elder He's expression involuntarily became a little ugly as Xiao Yan told the story. He turned his head slightly, and coldly stared at Lei Na who was climbing to his feet at the corner of the wall. This stare of him caused the expression of the originally somewhat anxious Lei Na to become much paler.

Liu Fei by the side also heard Xiao Yan reveal her involvement. Her pretty face involuntarily became ugly once again.

"Lei Na, as a senior, you actually failed to follow the rules of the tower. You will be fined thirty days of 'Fire Energy' which you must pay up within three days. Otherwise, you will be punished by being prohibited from entering the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' for one month." After Xiao Yan had revealed the entire story, Elder He nodded. Under the observations of numerous gazes, he turned his gaze toward Lei Na and coldly spoke.

Upon hearing the punishment that came out of Elder He's mouth, the surrounding students could not help but be startled. Immediately, they turned their pitiful gazes toward the pale-faced Lei Na. This fellow was going to bleed greatly this time around.

"Liu Fei, although you are not the primary offender, you have the fault of being an instigator and will be fined ten days of 'Fire Energy.' You must pay up within three days, or you will be punished as mentioned earlier." The cold gaze once again turned toward Liu Fei. That cry, however, caused Liu Fei to become a little dull. She did not expect that Elder Liu would also punish her.

"Xiao Yan, although you had good reason, your attack was too vicious. You will be fined five days of 'Fire Energy' as a warning." Elder He finally turned his gaze toward Xiao Yan and softly cried out.

Hearing that the punishment Elder He had given Xiao Yan was insignificant, the people around were once again shocked. They faced each other. Immediately, they appeared to have understood something and remained quiet. According to the rules, using a fatal attack during sparring

would receive an extremely heavy punishment. Some of the unlucky ones would even be disallowed to enter the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to train for one to two months. Compared with Xiao Yan's fine of five days of 'Fire Energy,' it was naturally the difference between the Heavens and the Earth...

No one expected Xiao Yan to possess such a backing. Liu Fei and Lei Na could be considered to have kicked a metal plate this time around.

"Elder He, isn't your punishment for Xiao Yan a little too light? A person using a fatal move while sparing will be prohibited from entering the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower!'" Liu Fei's face was green and her voice had become much sharper.

"If you are not satisfied with my judgement, you can go and find the First Elder or the Headmaster..." Elder Liu glanced at Liu Fei before speaking indifferently.

Liu Fei was furious when she heard this. This First Elder seldom appeared, where would she go and look for him? As for the Headmaster, she had not even seen this mysterious Headmaster once since she had entered the Inner Academy, not to mention finding him to seek redress for the injustice.

"Alright, the matter today shall end here. If there is anyone who does not obey the rules of the tower in the future, do not blame me for giving a heavy punishment." Elder He's gaze glanced around him. Those people who came into contact with his gaze hurriedly lowered their heads.

Elder He glanced at Xiao Yan before turning around and walking back down the path which he had come from.

"Little fellow, the next time that you spar with someone, don't go all out like this. It is good that you want to show your might, but one would not achieve what one desires if one overdoes things..." Xiao Yan eyed Elder He who was leaving. He was just about to bow and send the latter away respectfully when a low old voice reverberated softly by the side of his ears. Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this voice before he quietly nodded.

As Elder He left, this area once again descended into an embarrassed silence. There was additional respect and fear present in those gazes that looked at Xiao Yan. They were not formed from the Elder He covering up his actions, but were formed because of the terrifying fire lotus that Xiao Yan had displayed. A person with sharp eyes would be able to see that if Xiao Yan's attack had not stopped and Elder He did not appear, the current Lei Na might well have become a corpse by now.

Xiao Yan was unconcerned about the gazes around him. He once again turned around and walked into that high grade training room. When he passed Liu Fei, he paused his footsteps and said faintly, "I didn't hit you only because you are a woman. If you were a man, your ending would not have been much better than Lei Na's..."

Once he said this, Xiao Yan brushed his sleeves and walked into the training room, leaving behind a green-faced Liu Fei who was clenching her silver teeth.

Chapter 490: Progress of Training

Xiao Yan leaned his back against the door after he entered the training room. His originally sleek red face had suddenly become much paler. The 'Swift Wind Spirit Pill' that he had consumed before his training had caused the Dou Qi to increase its circulating intensity for a short period of time. However, after his training was interrupted, the side effect of the 'Swift Wind Spirit Pill' had appeared. The slowly circulating Dou Qi in his body caused Xiao Yan to have a weak feeling flowing all over his body. Earlier, one of the reasons that Xiao Yan had resorted to the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' when exchanging blows with Lei Na earlier was to use it to show his might and deter others. The other hidden reason was that the weak Dou Qi in his body was insufficient to allow him to hold out for too long against Lei Na's hands.

Xiao Yan glanced at his shattered robe and sighed gently. He could not help but feel some lingering fear in his heart. If Lei Na's attack earlier was a little faster, it was likely Xiao Yan would be forced to reveal an opening, and would end up being seriously injured. Fortunately, the appearance of the 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' had caused Lei Na to first lose his fighting spirit. The deterrent effect that he needed was also perfectly achieved. All of these had some element of luck mixed in as well.

Xiao Yan softly coughed for a couple of times. He slowly walked to the black stone platform and sat cross-legged on it with some difficulty. He inhaled and exhaled the warm air deeply a couple of times before forming his training seal. After which, he once again entered his training condition, circulating his Dou Qi and slowly recovered his condition.

After nearly three to four hours of training while sitting cross-legged, the weak feeling in Xiao Yan's body gradually disappeared. The slow Dou Qi as a result of the 'Swift Wind Spirit Pill' also began to slowly recover its normal state.

After the condition in his body recovered, Xiao Yan once again took out a 'Swift Wind Spirit Pill' and swallowed it. Once again, he entered into his retreat training state!

Earlier Xiao Yan came to know that Liu Fei appeared to have an extremely strong older cousin from her own mouth. Moreover, from looking at the degree of respect that Lei Na had toward this so called older cousin, it was clear that this person's strength far exceeded Lei Na. Although he was considered to have gained an advantage in this matter today because of favoritism by Elder He, he most likely had completely offended that woman because of this. This type of woman who appears to be gentle, but bones were extremely haughty would likely be unaware of what was called appeasement based on Xiao Yan's expectations. Hence... in order to put an end to some trouble in the future, the current Xiao Yan needed to swiftly raise his strength!

There was no concept of time during training. A full five days passed since the incident that had happened in the third level that day. During these five days, the name of Xiao Yan had gradually been transmitted into the ears of all the students who were training within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.'

A frightening fire lotus skill that had frightened Lei Na, who was a four star Dou Ling, until he had lost his fighting spirit on the spot. Xiao Yan had also not given Liu Fei, who possessed the beautiful name of Snow Fairy within the Inner Academy, even a little face, and after using such a heavy blow, he did not receive any great punishment from the usually strict Elder He. All of these mysterious incidents caused Xiao Yan to become the hottest topic of conversation within the Inner Academy in a short period of time.

Of course, when they were spreading the conversation contents to one another, there were quite a number of students who involuntarily felt respect in their hearts. Forget about discussing why the usually strict Elder He would treat Xiao Yan with such politeness. Just the frightening fire lotus of Xiao Yan's, which shocked Lei Na until the latter lost his fighting spirit, was sufficient to cause them to feel respect toward Xiao Yan. In this 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' and even the entire Inner Academy, the strong would ultimately be honored no matter how one put it. It was also because of the frightening fire lotus that Xiao Yan had displayed to cause

some of those suitors of Liu Fei's, who quietly admired her, not to dare look for Xiao Yan to issue a challenge. Otherwise, how would Xiao Yan be able to quietly undertake a five day retreat without anyone daring to come and interrupt him after having offended Liu Fei, the little beauty who possessed quite a great reputation within the Inner Academy?

However, no matter how one put it, the deterrent effect that Xiao Yan required was indeed something that he had successfully achieved!

People came and went in the spacious third level. The atmosphere was extremely lively and there would occasionally be one or two battle circles with heated fights. Many curious people surrounded these battle circles.

When the human flow that came and went passed through a certain corridor in the high grade training area, they would involuntarily throw their gaze toward a high grade training room by the side where a tag representing someone was occupying it hung. These gazes were filled with curiosity and some respect. During these few days, nearly all the students training in the third level knew that this training room was the place where the new student, Xiao Yan, who had shocked the elite four star Dou Ling, Lei Na, with the frightening fire lotus until he lost his fighting spirit, was staying in.

There were also quite a number of people who had come after hearing Xiao Yan's name. They wanted get a look at this student's appearance. However, ever since the end of the fight that day, Xiao Yan had not come out after entering that training room. This had caused them to be slightly disappointed. However, the people around could only give up the thought of seeing him. Although an ordinary Dou Zhe or even Da Dou Shi may need to eat something to fill one's belly after training for a day, the degree of one's resistance to hunger would become increasingly stronger following the increase in strength of one's Dou Qi. Once one reach the class of the Da Dou Shi, one might not be able to completely ignore eating food, but when one was in a training state, the body's consumption would reach its lowest point. If one did not consume any food for five days, there would not be any serious effect other than one's body being a little weaker.

Hence, after seeing the tightly shut training room door, the students who had come after hearing his name could only leave in disappointment. After all, they did not know just how long this retreat of Xiao Yan would continue for.

“Creak...”

The sudden sound of a door opening in the corridor attracted some gazes over. This was especially so when they saw the door number of the one that was being opened. They immediately became startled and their gazes became much hotter.

The entire noisy corridor had suddenly become much quieter. Numerous gazes were thrown to the door which was opening.

Under the focus of everyone’s gazes, the young man in black robes slowly walked out with a calm expression. When he saw those gazes in the corridor which were thrown at him, he could not help but knit his eyebrows slightly together. He helplessly shook his head, turned around and left this training room. After which, he slowly walked toward the entrance to the fourth level of the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’

After spending nearly seven days training on the third level, the perfect progress that Xiao Yan had obtained in his training had caused him to feel stunned. Xiao Yan was able to faintly feel that he had entered into the peak of a seven star Da Dou Shi in just this short seven days partly because of help of the ‘Swift Wind Spirit Pill,’ the ‘Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment,’ and the refining effect of the Heart Flame during this period of time. According to this speed, he might be able to touch the barrier of the eight star without much time and break through it in one go.

Xiao Yan felt extremely excited at his progress. However, just as Xiao Yan was planning to continue training and break through to the eight star level in one go, he was suddenly somewhat stunned to discover that the Heart Flame could not keep up. After nearly seven days the Heart Flame and the circulating speed of the Dou Qi, the Heart Flame of the third level was beginning to be unable to provide satisfactory supply. At times, it would be choppy, causing Xiao Yan to have no choice but to cut his

training and choose to come out from his retreat midway through it.

Now that the strength of the Heart Flame could no longer satisfy Xiao Yan's requirement, he could only continue down to the fourth level. Otherwise, his training speed might be greatly reduced.

Under the heated gazes of everyone, Xiao Yan slowly disappeared at the edge of the corridor. When they saw the path which he was taking, the crowd in the corridor involuntarily emitted sounds of private conversations.

"He appears to be intending to head to the fourth level?"

"Uh, isn't the fourth level a place that one must reach the Dou Ling class strength to be able to enter? Xiao Yan doesn't appear to have achieved it right?"

"Ah... but who knows. He can even defeat Lei Na. I think that he should be able to enter the fourth level, right?"

Everyone in the corridor faced each other before they immediately laughed bitterly and shook their heads.

Xiao Yan did not hear the private conversations behind him. He walked past the corridor before taking a turn, and saw the passageway which had instructors strictly guarding it. After hesitating for a moment, he walked over swiftly.

"One must have the strength of a Dou Ling in order to enter the fourth level. Those whose strength has not reached it are prohibited from entering!" An instructor saw Xiao Yan who was walking over from the distance and spoke lazily.

"Uh?" Xiao Yan's footsteps paused. Surprise flashed on his face. Immediately, he let out a bitter smile. It was unexpected that the condition to enter the fourth level was this harsh. Could he only continue to train at the third level? Just thinking of how the Heart Flame was humbled when faced with the circulating Dou Qi in his body, Xiao Yan could not help but feel a little headache.

"You... you are Xiao Yan?" Just when Xiao Yan felt a headache, the other

instructor who had come forward to size Xiao Yan up suddenly opened his mouth and asked in surprise.

Hearing the surprised voice of his companion, the instructor who had spoken lazily earlier also raised his head in astonishment. He eyed the black-robed young man who had come in front of him and saw that somewhat familiar face. Once again, he recalled the instructions of the First Elder and hurriedly said, “You are that Xiao Yan who had a conflict with Lei Na a couple of days ago?”

Xiao Yan hesitated a little when he saw the surprised gazes of those two instructors. He nodded slightly before immediately cupping his hands together toward the two instructors and said, “Since this student has not met the requirement, I will continue to train at the third level. I have disturbed you, instructors.”

“Hey, wait!”

Seeing Xiao Yan turn around with the intention of leaving, the instructor from earlier hurriedly stopped him. The latter’s face was full of smiles as he said, “Elder He has already given instructions to us. If you want to enter the fourth level, we need to do things according to the rules. Therefore... please.”

Xiao Yan could not help but be startled when he saw the smiling manner of this instructor. Joy immediately surfaced on his face. If he could enter the fourth level to train, breaking through to the eight star Da Dou Shi would be just around the corner. Immediately, he hurriedly cupped his hands toward the two of them. “Thank you very much, Elder He and instructors.”

“Ke ke, there’s no harm... your level may not have reached the requirement, but in terms of strength you do have the qualification.” The two instructors smiled gently and replied when they saw the joyous face of Xiao Yan.

“Alright, you should go down first. I saw that you have undertaken a retreat for quite a number of days. After entering the fourth level, you should eat something. Otherwise, your body cannot endure this kind of

closed door training.”

“Thank you for your concern, instructor.”

Xiao Yan voiced his thanks toward the two of them, cupped his hands together and hurriedly walked into the passageway. After which, he disappeared around a corner with numerous stunned gazes behind him.

Chapter 491: Breaking Through Once Again

The students who had the qualifications to enter the fourth level of the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' to train could basically be considered the top among the Inner Academy. Being unworthy of this level, the current Xiao Yan did not act so mightily like he did in the third level. Hence, after he entered the fourth level, he first settled the most important matter of filling his belly before choosing a middle grade training room to continue his important task of his retreat.

Although the effect of training in the middle grade training room on the fourth level could not compare with that of a high grade one, if one was to compare the degree of power of the Heart Flame, it was much stronger than that obtained by training in the high grade training room on the third level. From the perspective of the current Xiao Yan, it was just suitable. His training would also not be frequently interrupted because of people trying to snatch a high grade training room.

After finding an empty training room, Xiao Yan once again took out the medicinal cauldron and refined some 'Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment' and 'Swift Wind Spirit Pill.' During the seven days of retreat, he had exhausted all of the pills from the last refinement. Therefore, he needed to once again open his cauldron and refine them.

With the refinement experience from the last round, Xiao Yan's refinement this time around naturally appeared even more skillful. Thus, the time which he used was greatly reduced. Moreover, the quality and quantity that he refined was clearly better than his first attempt.

After Xiao Yan successfully refined the two types of medicinal pills that he needed, he began his retreat. His great breakthrough plan would continue without bothering about anything else.

This time around, Xiao Yan's retreat was not interrupted midway through, perhaps due to some other factors. This also gave him his most favorable training time.

There was no concept of time when training. With a flick of a finger, nearly half a month passed by. During this reclusive retreat, Xiao Yan would occasionally leave the training room but around ninety-five percent of his time was spent within the training room, persevering to breakthrough the eight star barrier.

Under this kind of training where he forgot to eat and sleep, Xiao Yan, who had already reached the peak of the seven star Da Dou Shi class, had finally vaguely touched the eight star boundary after half a month. Now, after two to three days of training, the Dou Qi in his body finally reached a stage where it was completely full. It was like a tank that was filled to capacity with water. At this moment, the Dou Qi in Xiao Yan's body was like water which was about to overflow. As long as one added a little more, it would break the bounds of the water tank and enter into an even larger world.

This little opportunity finally came suddenly during one of Xiao Yan's training where he was slightly unconscious...

Xiao Yan's upper body was naked within the quiet training room. He sat cross-legged on the black stone platform. Both of his hands formed the training seals. His face was like an old monk meditating, appearing calm and indifferent. The threads of powerful energy visible to the naked eye were pouring unceasingly into his body due to the effect of the 'Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment' that was spread all over.

The quiet atmosphere continued for an unknown period of time. Suddenly, an extremely slight but strange, low sound appeared like a drum being heavily pounded beside one's ears. If one were to carefully listen to it, this sound was actually being emitted from Xiao Yan's body!

Not long after the appearance of this strange low sound, Xiao Yan's wooden pillar like unmoving body appeared to have received an electric shock. It trembled abruptly and an unusual sleek redness immediately swarmed up onto his face. Of course, the change was not only restricted to this little bit on the outside. An extremely great change appeared to also be happening in his body. The most obvious one was the suction force in his body which had suddenly rose explosively.

Under this incomparably powerful suction force, the dark-red, hot energy threads lingering around his body that was originally entering his body in a successive manner had become like a herd of wild bulls that was in a panic state at this moment. They no longer cared even a little about order as they wildly swarmed into Xiao Yan!

Xiao Yan's body had once again turned into a bottomless pit at this moment. It received all the energy that came, regardless how large the energy that swarmed over was. Moreover, there was no signs of this momentum being reduced. Instead, the suction force became increasingly stronger. Finally, it resulted in the energy in the training room to appear like the surface of a calm lake after one had thrown a large rock into it. The energy fluctuated and an extremely large energy ripple with Xiao Yan at the middle was suddenly formed. A powerful suction force stirred all of the energy that filled the training room.

The unusual phenomenon within the training room continued for nearly over ten minutes before the clear explosive sound of bone slowly became weaker...

After the appearance of the somewhat strange bone explosive sound, the enormous energy ripple within the training room became increasingly weaker. A moment later, it finally completely disappeared... Following this disappearance of the energy ripple, the human figure that was seated cross-legged was once again revealed.

The black robe on the body of the current Xiao Yan had been shaken by the wildly pouring energy earlier until it was in tatters. The 'Green Ganoderma Fire Spirit Ointment' that was applied all over his skin had also been vaporized and depleted. Other than the seven-colored small snake hiding and sleeping on his arm, the other remaining part of his body, which was still skinny, did not have much change compared to earlier.

The green-colored flame soared strangely from within Xiao Yan's tightly shut eyes as they were slowly opened. Finally, it shrouded over his dark-black pupils. It was awhile later before it gradually disappeared.

The flame was withdrawn. The pair of dark-black pupils were somewhat darker, deeper, and more profound compared to earlier. A long turbid breath moved along his throat and was exhaled. This breath actually contained a little black vapor.

Xiao Yan immediately knit his eyebrows tightly upon seeing the black vapor in his breath. His heart only recalled something which he had nearly forgotten, the 'Searing Poison.' It was that mutated 'Searing Poison' that had been hiding deep within his body and was difficult to cure just like maggots within one's tarsal bones.

"It is really unexpected that I have only managed to remove this little bit of 'Searing Poison' by borrowing the strength of breaking through... this damn thing. It really causes one's entire body to feel uncomfortable by concealing itself in one's body." Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and shook his head. Although the 'Searing Poison' currently did not appear to display any harm to his body because of the protection of the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' that his body enjoyed, this thing was ultimately a thorn in Xiao Yan's heart each day that it was not removed. After all, he had personally witnessed its strength. Even Nalan Jie, with his Dou Wang class strength, had nearly lost his life because of this thing. There was no need to even mention him, who was a seven star, no, an eight star Da Dou Shi now.

Xiao Yan sighed gently as he temporarily put down the worry over the 'Searing Poison' that he had in his heart. He slowly stood up and twisted his body. Immediately, a clear bone cracking sound, like that of a firecracker being lit, appeared within the training room.

As the cracking sound appeared, a relaxed and full feeling seeped out from within Xiao Yan's bones. After a twenty plus days retreat, he had finally broke through to an eight star Da Dou Shi as he had hoped. Such a fruitful result was worthy of his twenty plus days of reclusive and tough training!

"Already eight star. Looks like my distance to the Dou Ling class... is not far..." Xiao Yan smiled. He lowered his head to eye the 'Seven-Colored Heaven Swallowing Python' on his arm which carried an icy-cold temperature and could not help but say with a bitter smile, "This fellow is

really becoming increasingly greedy for more sleep these days. It was not even woken up after such an large activity...”

Although Xiao Yan was scolding with a smile on his mouth, his heart sunk greatly. This kind of long-term slumber of the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python’ was clearly irrational. According to common sense, the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python,’ which was in its growing period, should be extremely lively. However, it was current drowsy all day and was not even the least bit alert... Xiao Yan had a faint inkling on what kind of abnormality this meant. Immediately, he could not help but become a little worried.

“Looks like the spirit of the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python’ has already begun to be pressured by that of Queen Medusa... According to this situation, I’m afraid that in less than a year, Queen Medusa will successfully occupy the body of the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python’. At that time, her spirit and the body will merge. She will also truly become an absolute strong Dou Zong... Dammit, from the looks of the viciousness of that woman, the first thing she will do after she gains control of the body will be to point a blade at me...” Xiao Yan’s hand rubbed the somewhat icy-cold body of the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python’. His brows were knit until they formed a straight line as he slowly muttered.

“Rest assured that she will not attack you before she obtains the ‘Thawing Spirit Pill.’ How is it so easy for the spirit and the physical body to perfectly merge? She must borrow the help of the ‘Thawing Spirit Pill’ to first swallow the spirit of the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python.’ Only after that can she merge with the body of the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python.’ Otherwise, she will not be able to achieve total control. The body of the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python’ would only become a burden to her.” An old laugh suddenly sounded from within Xiao Yan’s heart, comforting his uneasy heart.

“Teacher!”

Xiao Yan’s face rejoiced upon hearing the voice in his heart. Only after hearing Yao Lao’s words did he let out a heavy sigh of relief. He smiled and nodded as he spoke in his heart, “It will be for the best if it is like this. As long as she still requires the ‘Thawing Spirit Pill,’ I will have the chips

to discuss conditions with her. It will naturally be for the best if I can rope in an elite Dou Zong.”

“Yes, Queen Medusa who broke through the limits of a Dou Huang will have limitless potential in the future. Back then, a Medusa evolved and appeared on the Dou Qi continent once. However, her actual body was not the ‘Seven-Colored Heaven Swallowing Python’ but another ancient ferocious beast: ‘Seven Wings Purple Golden Snake.’ Although it is a little weaker than the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python,’ three elite Dou Zun were eventually mobilized in order to exterminate her back then.” Yao Lao laughed. His voice contained a feeling of cherishment.

“Three Dou Zuns?”

TL: For those who cannot remember, Dou Zun the next level after Dou Zong. Refer to wiki

The corner of Xiao Yan’s mouth parted. This title that contained an immense pressure caused Xiao Yan to not know what to say. He was black for a long while before his gaze turned toward the ‘Heaven Swallowing Python’ on his arm. He laughed bitterly and muttered, “Is this ‘grandaunt’ going to be that powerful in the future? Won’t I be unlucky? Ah... ‘Heaven Swallowing Python,’ you must hang on. Do not get swallowed by that woman. Otherwise none of us will have a good time...”

TL: grandaunt – refers to a female who is great and difficult to deal with

As Xiao Yan thought about the partially visible cold and indifferent killing intent that Queen Medusa would always display toward him, a cold shiver violently occurred in Xiao Yan’s heart. Being eyed by this kind of frightening woman really could not be considered good news...

Chapter 492: Tyrant Spear Liu Qing

Xiao Yan eyed the lush green color outside as he walked out of the tower's door. He felt the warm sunlight that scattered down from the sky and involuntarily had an introspective feeling. He opened both his arms before he suddenly laughed bitterly. It was really unexpected that this retreat, which was not even a month long, nearly caused his mind to be overly sensitive.

Since the Heavy Xuan Ruler had basically become Xiao Yan's signature item at this moment, he did not frequently carry it on him in order to save some trouble. Although it would affect his training this way, it also caused Xiao Yan to have much less of a need to worry.

Xiao Yan followed the road and walked for nearly half an hour before he returned to the new student residence area of 'Pan's Gate.' He eyed those guards standing as straight as a pen at the entrance and involuntarily praised quietly. It was really indeed as Xun Er had said. This 'Pan's Gate' was basically undergoing changes like day and night. By observing the aura of just these few guards of 'Pan's Gate,' it was likely that they were all around the peak of the Dou Shi class. Clearly, quite a number of members of 'Pan's Gate' were training within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' during this one month. Moreover, it appeared that the effects of the tower were quite beneficial.

Xiao Yan slowly walked toward the entrance. Those few guards on sentry duty actually still remembered Xiao Yan's face. After being initially startled, some excitement swarmed onto their faces instantly. When the former walked closer, the few of them pulled their throat as they shouted in unison, "Chief!"

The loud and clear voices pulled over the gazes of some of the people coming and going. Xiao Yan parted his mouth, and smiled foolishly at the few of them and helplessly shook his head. He walked forward, patted one person on his shoulder before swaying leisurely as he walked into the new student area. He left behind the guard whose face was shocked from being favored due to Xiao Yan's actions.

“Hee hee, after not having seen him for one month, Chief’s strength appears to have advanced quite a lot. Looks like an elite Dou Ling will appear in our ‘Pan’s Gate’ very soon. At that time, we will not need to watch other people’s expressions to do things.” The guard, whose shoulder was patted by Xiao Yan earlier, could not help but part his mouth and speak with a smile as he eyed the partially visible back of Xiao Yan.

“Che, who is the chief afraid of now? All of you have also recently been training frequently within the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ Don’t tell me that you have not even heard of that incident? Hee hee, shocking a four star Dou Ling until the latter lost his fighting strength with just one strike. How many people in this Inner Academy can do this kind of thing?”

“I have also heard of that incident. Ha ha. Now, no other faction look down on us, like in the past, upon hearing that we are members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ while we are training in the tower. This is mostly because of Chief!”

Xiao Yan was naturally unable to hear the conversation of these guards. However, since he had entered the new students area until now, the occasional members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ coming and going would be initially startled upon seeing him before they immediately gave way. Their gazes were filled with respect and fear as they eyed Xiao Yan who walked past them with some doubt.

Xiao Yan walked back to the small pavilion home. After he entered the door, he discovered that Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao were present. Even that Lin Yan was also unexpectedly in the hall.

Xun Er was the first among the four people in the hall to discover Xiao Yan in the doorway. However, the one who had the most intense reaction was Lin Yan. One could see him jumping from the chair like a rabbit as his body moved toward Xiao Yan’s side in a lightning-like manner. After which, he grabbed Xiao Yan’s sleeves under the latter’s stunned gaze and frantically scolded, “You, little fellow, are finally back. Hurry up. The ‘Ice Spirit Pill’ and the ‘Marrow Washing Cold Spirit Liquid’ have all been used up. I have already waited for you for three, maybe four days. If you did not return by tomorrow, I wanted to go into the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to look for you.”

Xiao Yan used all his might to pull back his sleeve which was pulled by Lin Yan. He rolled his eyes and said, “Why are you in such a hurry? You won’t die just because the poison isn’t expelled for one or two more days...”

Xiao Yan ignored Lin Yan after he said this. He walked into the hall and sat on a chair before speaking with a smile toward Xun Er and the two others, “How is it? Have there been any problems with ‘Pan’s Gate’ recently? That ‘White Gang’ did not make any movements, right?”

“Ah, originally, there were still members who said that they had met some people from the ‘White Gang’ coming to find trouble while they were training in the tower during the first one to two days of your retreat. However, thanks to your recent prestige within the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ after that, now the ‘White Gang’ does not dare to be too presumptuous. They reduced some of those small actions. I think that your deterrence had some effect.”

“Moreover, there are currently quite a number of older students who were free agents that want to join our ‘Pan’s Gate.’ After some assessment, the current size of ‘Pan’s Gate’ is around a quarter larger than before your retreat. Moreover, the strength of those older students was not bad. Most of them have the strength of the Da Dou Shi class.” Xun Er personally poured a warm cup of tea for Xiao Yan as she pursed her mouth and smiled.

“Oh?”

Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He immediately smiled in a stunned manner and said, “I only used Lei Na’s matter to serve as a warning because I wanted to make it so that no one would disturb me during my retreat. It is really unexpected that there were these kinds of benefits...”

“Hei, there is indeed some benefit. However, there is also quite a lot of disadvantage. You caused Lei Na to become bald. Now, he will grit his teeth upon mentioning you. Moreover, you even offended Liu Fei, that woman who is all chest and no brains. Originally, offending her is

nothing. However, you should not forget what kind of person her older cousin brother is. Tyrant Spear Liu Qing. This name is not some nameless individual within the Inner Academy. Hee hee, if he wants to speak for Liu Fei, perhaps even your green-purple fire lotus could do nothing to his ‘Mountain Splitting Spear.’” Seeing Xiao Yan returning, Lin Yan also calmed down his anxiety. He crossed the hall and coldly laughed.

“How strong is that Liu Qing?” Xiao Yan could not help but frown as he inquired upon hearing the name Liu Qing once again.

“You can ask Wu Hao. Recently, he has lingered around the Fighting Arena frequently and should have some understanding of Liu Qing.” Lin Yan shrunk back into his chair. He felt that explaining this kind of thing was the most troublesome. Hence, he merely curled his lips toward Wu Hao.

Wu Hao shook his head helplessly when he saw Xiao Yan’s gaze shoot over. He mused for a moment before saying, “Tyrant Spear Liu Qing is a top expert among the top ten of the ‘Strong Ranking.’ One can count the number of students in the Inner Academy who are able to defeat him with one’s fingers. Additionally, in the Fighting Arena, he was one of the few extremely strong people who had once maintained eight consecutive victories. There are quite a number of people in the Inner Academy who view his name with reverence.”

Xiao Yan took a shallow sip of tea from the teacup in his hand and quietly nodded. With Wu Hao’s strength, he still lost more than he won in the Fighting Arena where strong people were as numerous as the clouds. Hence, Xiao Yan could vaguely guess just how difficult the so-called eight consecutive victory was. It appeared... that this Liu Qing was indeed a person that was extremely difficult to deal with.

“However, you can rest assured that that fellow doesn’t have the time to help speak out for Liu Fei for the time being. In another half a year’s time, it will be the Inner Academy Grand Competition that is held once every five years. He is currently spending every day behind closed doors. Even if he occasionally has the time to come out from the tower, it would be to practice his Dou Skill in the Fighting Arena. Thus, he will not come and

find trouble with you before the Grand Competition is over. After that, however... hee hee, it will be hard to say.” Lin Yan gloatingly spoke with a smile.

“Inner Academy Grand Competition?” Xiao Yan’s brows formed a straight line as he asked feeling surprised, “There is this Competition? Why is it that I have never heard any news of it before?”

“This Grand Competition has nothing to do with you... this is a competition between the experts on the ‘Strong Ranking.’ Ordinary people can only watch the fun from below. Hence, all of you naturally don’t have the qualifications to know about it.” Lin Yan curled his lips and said, “As long as one is able to enter the top ten in this competition, one will have the qualifications to become someone that can be chosen to become an Elder. Moreover, one would even obtain the qualification for a chance to enter the ninth level and receive the forging of one’s body by the source of the Heart Flame!”

“Do you know what the source of the Heart Flame is? Simply put, if one was to receive the forging of one’s body by the Heart Flame’s source, one would obtain a pass that leads one to advance to the Dou Wang class provided that one was not someone who is so dreadfully unlucky. Do you understand if it is said in this manner?”

“A direct pass to the Dou Wang class?” When these few words entered their ears, the eyes of Hu Jia and Wu Hao became instantly hot. In the training of Dou Qi, the Dou Wang class was basically a watershed class that nearly opposed the heavens. Countless numbers of people, who had quite good training talent, were stuck at the edge of the Dou Ling class and were unable to take that one step forward for a long time.

“Heart Flame’s source?”

Compared to the two of them, Xiao Yan placed his focus on this other vocabulary instead. Source... could it be that it is saying... the original body of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame?’

The teacup in his head trembled slightly. Some of the tea splashed out. Xiao Yan forcefully suppressed the shock in his heart as he slowly placed

the teacup on the table. He raised his head and asked Lin Yan, "What requirement must one have in order to enter the ninth level?"

"You can forget about having such hope." Lin Yan rolled his eyes and replied faintly, "Putting it simply, it is impossible for the students to enter deep into the ninth or tenth level. Only the Elders of the Academy have such qualifications. Therefore, most of those fellows who can graduate and leave, instead stay in the academy with the intention of becoming an Elder. This is because only by becoming an Elder will one be able to enter the ninth or even tenth level to train. This way... it would enable them to swiftly touch the barrier to the Dou Huang class."

"A strong Dou Huang..." Xiao Yan gently sighed. He exchanged glances with Wu Hao by his side and saw a shock within the other party's eyes. This class could enable one to become an imposing authority of a group even when placed within the entire continent. It was really unexpected that some fellows within the Inner Academy actually had such ambition.

"That 'Grand Competition'... is it a competition that only those who have entered the 'Strong Ranking' can participate?" Xiao Yan gently tapped his finger on the table and asked softly.

"Yes. After all, even if one were to lower the competence level, do you hope that some of those new students, the ones who entered the academy recently, are able to possess the qualification to be potentially selected as an Elder?" Lin Yan's words were still that direct. He appeared to have forgotten that the four people in front of him were novices who had entered the Inner Academy less than two months ago.

Xiao Yan could only helplessly shake his head at the vicious tongue of this fellow. He raised his head slightly and eyed the ceiling. The glow in his eyes was flickering indefinitely. This was perhaps... an opportunity.

Chapter 493: Earning Fire Energy

Xiao Yan carefully observed the expression of Lin Yan in front of him within the room. When he discovered that the red glow in his eyes was much better compared to back then, he nodded slightly and softly spoke, “Looks like the consumption of the ‘Ice Spirit Pill’ and the external application of the ‘Marrow Washing Cold Spirit Liquid’ have an extremely notable results with the removal of this ‘Fire Poison.’”

“Yes, it is indeed very effective. Each time after I train in the water in which one drop of ‘Marrow Washing Cold Spirit Liquid’ is placed, that water would turn as red as blood. Moreover, I also sensed the Fire Poison in my body swiftly becoming weaker.” Lin Yan’s face was filled with excitement. This problem which had worried him for a long while could finally be completely cured now. This was undoubtedly extremely good news for him.

“I think that if you use these medicines the way they should be used for another month, the Fire Poison in your body should be completely expelled.” Xiao Yan smiled and took out a bottle of ‘Ice Spirit Pill’ and ‘Marrow Washing Cold Spirit Liquid.’ These medicines were completely refined by him while he was in his retreat. Hence, he saved the trouble of refining them again at this moment.

Lin Yan snatched the two bottles of medicine from Xiao Yan’s hand in a lightning-like manner. He parted his mouth and smiled. He flung his hand and a pale-green-colored shadow was shot toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan dexterously received the green shadow that was shot over. There was a pale warm jade-like item in his hand. Xiao Yan’s eyes drifted and he was somewhat surprised to realize that this pale-green shadow was actually the ‘Green Wood Celestial Vine.’

“This is?” Xiao Yan held the ‘Green Wood Celestial Vine’ tightly in his hand as he raised his head to speak to Lin Yan, “Aren’t you afraid that the medicine that I gave you will not completely cure you and you are giving this to me now?”

“It is not like you are by yourself. Such a big ‘Pan’s Gate’ is present here. Do I need to be afraid of where you can run off to? Moreover, after personally experiencing it, I am even more clearly aware just how good the effect of this thing is than you, the person who refined it.” Lin Yan rolled his eyes, curled his lips and said.

“Ke ke, in that case, thank you very much.” Xiao Yan cupped his hands toward Lin Yan and carefully stored this ‘Green Wood Celestial Vine,’ which he had obtained with great difficulty, within his storage ring. He immediately heaved a long sigh of relief in his heart. With this, he was only left with the final two ingredients needed to refine the ‘Ground Spirit Pill.’ However, the last two were also items that were extremely difficult to obtain...

“Alright, now that I have obtained the thing I need, I should also be going.” Lin Yan waved his hand toward Xiao Yan before turning around and walking out of the door. Just before he exited through the door, he turned around and smiled as he said to Xiao Yan, “Although there is a mixture of a transaction between us, I, Lin Yan still owe you a favor. Don’t tell me that this green vine can be used as payment. My life is much more valuable than a withered branch.”

Xiao Yan could only smile bitterly when he heard this.

“If that Liu Qing comes and finds trouble with you in the future, you can send someone to inform me. I have not exchange blows with that fellow for a long while. I wonder how much sharper and overbearing his ‘Mountain Splitting Spear’ is compared to the past?” After saying this, Lin Yan exited the room and his footsteps gradually became distant.

“Although this fellow has a violent temper, he may be considered a person one can befriend.” Xiao Yan laughed softly as he shook his head. He stood up, stretched his lazy waist before slowly walking out of the room.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, how much ‘Fire Energy’ is remaining on your Fire Crystal Card?” Xun Er played with the three green-colored Fire Crystal Cards on her hand within the hall. As she eyed the number on it, she

involuntarily smiled bitterly and shook her head. After which, she raised her head and asked Xiao Yan, who had just descended from the upper floor, a question.

“Uh... it appears like there is only thirty plus more... it is not even enough to train for ten days in the fourth level.” Xiao Yan was initially startled before he immediately replied helplessly.

Xun Er sighed when she heard this. Her expression appeared a little vexed.

“What is it? Do you all need ‘Fire Energy?’” Xiao Yan could not help but be stunned as he asked upon seeing this manner that she displayed.

“It is not that we need but our ‘Pan’s Gate’ needs it...” Hu Jia to the side continued from where Xun Er left off as she said, “It is not like you don’t know that some of the rewards of ‘Pan’s Gate’ requires ‘Fire Energy.’ Now that ‘Pan Gate’ has just started, those ‘Fire Energy’ rewards that are required would naturally come from our own pockets. Xun Er’s ‘Fire Energy’ is almost used up. Recently, she did not even enter the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower’ to train even once... I have exchanged for a Dou Technique a while back so I don’t have much left. Now, I have handed over all of it. As for Wu Hao... this fellow is fast losing more than he makes in the Fighting Arena.”

Wu Hao’s face involuntarily turned red when he heard the last couple of words that Hu Jia said. He laughed dryly, “It is because I am not used to it in the past. Recently, my winning percentage is increasing. Not long later, I should be able to earn back my losses.”

“By the time you earn back your losses, ‘Pan’s Gate’ will have lost credibility due to the problem of not being able to pay some of the internal rewards. Once our credibility is lost, I’m afraid that those new members who have come after hearing about the ‘Fire Energy’ will immediately leave.” Hu Jia threw a look at him as she coldly snorted.

Xiao Yan could not help but feel some guilt when he heard Hu Jia saying this. He had been merrily training, but Xun Er and Hu Jia had not even entered the tower for even a day...

“Xiao Yan ge-ge need not think too much about it. You are currently the face of our ‘Pan’s Gate’ outside. This face naturally requires strength in order to support it. Without your deterrent effect outside, it would be difficult for this ‘Pan’s Gate’ to rise no matter what kind of measures we used.” Xun Er appeared to understand the guilt in Xiao Yan’s heart as she spoke gently with a slight smile.

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly. He mused for a long while before slowly speaking, “Now that the ‘Fire Energy’ which everyone earned during the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ is about to be exhausted, it is indeed time for us to plan how to earn ‘Fire Energy’... Do you know how can one obtain ‘Fire Energy’ within the Inner Academy?”

“The most inefficient method is to take up some cleaning type of low grade task within the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower.’ However, this method would be too slow and it is also quite tiring. Hence, most of the people would wait for the ‘Fire Energy’ to be distributed by the Inner Academy each month. However, there are also some stronger people who would choose to enter the Fighting Arena and use their fighting results to win some ‘Fire Energy.’ This method is much faster but not as stable. This is because if there is the event where one meets an even stronger opponent, one would not only be unable to win ‘Fire Energy’ but would also lose quite a lot of it.” Xun Er’s delicate hand pulled apart her black hair that had drifted in front of her forehead while she voiced her thoughts.

“There are also some people who enter deep into the mountains to hunt for Magical Beasts to search for various different kinds of medicinal ingredients. Moreover, outside of the Inner Academy are vast mountains that stretch for thousands of kilometers. Such a vast region does not lack some of the caves that the predecessors left behind. If one were lucky to find one, it would be an unexpected windfall. Those high class Dou Techniques, Qi Methods, etc. that were left behind by the ancient people sell very well within the Inner Academy. Moreover, the price usually leans toward the higher end.”

Xiao Yan crossed his ten fingers together and quietly nodded. He asked

softly, “Will anyone use ‘Fire Energy’ to purchase medicinal pills within the Inner Academy?”

“One can naturally do so. Medicinal pills are extremely rare items that can be compared with Qi Techniques and Dou Skills.” Xun Er smiled and nodded. Her wandering eyes stopped on Xiao Yan’s body. Those watery pupils of hers contained a faint smile, “Why? Does Xiao Yan ge-ge intend to sell medicinal pills?”

“This is my area of expertise. Naturally, I cannot abandon it.” Xiao Yan smiled and said, “Are there any other people selling medicinal pills within the Inner Academy?”

Xun Er’s eyebrows were suddenly knit slightly together when this was mentioned. She smiled bitterly and nodded as she spoke, “There are indeed other people doing this. Moreover, it is not a person but a faction.”

“Faction?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this.

“This faction’s name is called the ‘Medicine Gang.’ Everyone in the gang is an alchemist that entered the Inner Academy from the Alchemist Department...” Xun Er voiced her thoughts, “This ‘Medicine Gang’ basically has a monopoly of over ninety percent of the medicinal pills being sold in the Inner Academy. Some of the other fragmented alchemists have difficulty contending against them. It is said that the leader of the ‘Medicine Gang’ is even able to refine a tier four medicinal pill.”

“If we are also going to sell medicinal pills, I’m afraid that we will come into direct conflict with this ‘Medicine Gang.’”

“Being able to refine a tier four medicinal pill huh...” Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He smiled faintly and said, “Let’s not bother too much. After all, we also need to survive. Competition is naturally unavoidable. I am not afraid of them as long as they don’t use underhanded tactics.” Being only able to refine a tier four medicinal pill. Speaking from the view of Xiao Yan, who had successfully refined the ‘Three-Lines Green Spirit Pill,’ this leader was an opponent that was not too tricky to defeat.

Seeing that Xiao Yan did not shrink back, Xun Er also nodded. She

smiled and said, "Since this is the case, our 'Pan's Gate' shall also sell medicinal pills. However, if this is the case, Xiao Yan ge-ge might have to toil a little."

"As the leader of 'Pan's Gate', I naturally need to contribute a little. Otherwise, won't I die of guilt when compared to all of you?" Xiao Yan smiled and asked.

"If you want to sell medicinal pills, I suggest that you focus on the Fighting Arena. Everyday, there are people there who are injured because of a fight. Moreover, if you do not need too many materials to refine the medicinal pill that can recover Dou Qi, like the one you gave us to consume during the Hunting Competition back then, it is likely that there would be countless people competing to purchase it." Wu Hao suggested. Having recently and frequently muddled along in the Fighting Arena, he naturally knew what kind of medicinal pill was valuable and scarce at that place.

"'Energy Recovery Pill' huh... It is not very difficult but don't tell me that the 'Medicine Gang' is unable to refine this kind of medicinal pill that can recover Dou Qi?" Xiao Yan mused for a while before he smiled and nodded. With his current refining skills, refining the 'Energy Recovery Pill' was an extremely easy matter.

"They can... But the kind of medicinal pill which recovers Dou Qi that they refine does not have the same effect as your 'Energy Recovery Pill.' I bought one once, spending two days of 'Fire Energy.' Therefore, I can differentiate the difference between the two of them." Wu Hao shook his head and said.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He leaned his body on the back of the chair. His eyes suddenly brightened as he laughed softly, "Other than the Fighting Arena, perhaps within the 'Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower' is also a good place to swallow medicinal pills. The people training within it do not dare to train for a long time because they are afraid of the Fire Poison invading their bodies. If there is a kind of medicinal pill that can enable them to ignore the encroachment of the Fire Poison for a period of time, I think that there would likely be many people happy to purchase it..."

“Ignore the encroachment of the Fire Poison?”

“Ke ke, completely ignoring it would naturally be extremely difficult. However, the pill will allow a person to extend their stay of one day to two...” Xiao Yan smiled and explained.

“Ah, this will indeed be an immense attraction for those people who are in a hurry to train...” Xun Er and the other two exchanged gazes and nodded.

“In that case, let us decide it this way. From tomorrow on, I will give all of you a list that contains all the medicinal ingredients needed to refine the medicinal pills. All of you will go around and purchase them. Just leave the matter of refining the pills to me...”

Chapter 494: Refining In Bulk

The next morning, the entire 'Pan's Gate' began to operate like a machine. Early in the morning, Xun Er and the other two brought some people out of the new student area. After which, they rushed about the entire Inner Academy, purchasing the medicinal ingredients on the list Xiao Yan had given to them from all over the place.

After being busy for nearly an entire day, the group of them finally brought back excitement and fatigue as they hurried to the new student area.

Xiao Yan eyed the large pile of medicinal ingredients in front of him in a quiet, secret room in the small pavilion home. He saw the tiredness that remained on the faces of Xun Er and the other two. He involuntarily said with a gently smile, "You have worked hard."

"These medicinal ingredients spent a total of one hundred eighty plus days of 'Fire Energy.' Originally, the four of us were unable to scrape together these 'Fire Energy.' However, Atai and the other members of 'Pan's Gate' took the initiative to donate and supplement a little. Now, these medicinal ingredients are basically all the remaining property of 'Pan Gate.'" Xun Er sighed.

Xiao Yan quietly nodded. He was slightly moved as he said, "You can rest assured. Remember the 'Fire Energy' that Atai and the rest donated will be rewarded. Once the medicinal pills are successfully sold, return double the amount to them."

"Yes." Xun Er nodded. She touched the pile of medicinal ingredients as she knit her eyebrows slightly and said, "The price of purchasing medicinal ingredients within the Inner Academy is a little expensive. I am thinking of forming a group within 'Pan's Gate' or hiring some people from within the Inner Academy to specifically search for the medicinal ingredients that we need deep in the mountains once this batch of medicinal pills is refined. After that, we will pay them a monthly pay according to the number or quality of the medicinal ingredients that each

of them hand over. This way, we might greatly reduce our cost.”

Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He immediately nodded as his gaze swept over the large pile of medicinal ingredients in front of him. There was actually not that many medicinal ingredients. However, the price of which was the painstaking effort of the entire ‘Pan’s Gate.’ Xiao Yan sighed. This burden was a little heavy...

“Ke ke, Xiao Yan ge-ge, we will hand all the matters after this to you. We cannot give the slightest help in the matter of refining pills.” Xun Er laughed in a lovely manner.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded seriously. He said in a soft voice, “You can rest assured. I will turn all of these medicinal ingredients into the medicinal pills that we need. I will definitely not betray everyone’s expectation.”

“That’s right, these are the two kind of medicinal pills that I have specially sent someone to purchase from the site where the ‘Medicine Gang’ sells their medicine. One of them is the medicinal pill to recover Dou Qi that Wu Hao mentioned. The ‘Medicine Gang’ calls it ‘Return Spring Pill.’ The other kind is a type of healing medicine which has quite a good effect on external injuries...” Xun Er suddenly took out two small jade bottles from her storage ring, and gently placed them in front of Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He could not help but immediately praise Xun Er’s intelligence within his heart.

“Alright, Xiao Yan ge-ge, the things that follow will be entirely up to you.” Xun Er suddenly smiled. She waved her hand toward Hu Jia and Wu Hao and the three of them slowly exited the room. After which, she tightly shut the door.

As the three people left, the secret room once again descended into silence. Xiao Yan stared at the large pile of medicinal ingredients in front of him. He let out a long sigh after a while before sitting down cross-legged and waving his hand. The medicinal cauldron appeared in front of him.

After taking out the medicinal cauldron, Xiao Yan smoothly received the two kinds of medicinal pills that Xun Er had purchased. First, he took out

the so-called 'Return Spring Pill.' It was a green-colored medicinal pill that contained an extremely faint medicinal fragrance. Xiao Yan gently sniffed this faint medicinal fragrance before lifting his eyebrows. He shook his head lightly with some disdain. It was likely that this so-called 'Return Spring Pill' did not possess over four kinds of medicinal ingredients. Moreover, they were all extremely common types of medicinal ingredients. In the eyes of Xiao Yan with his extremely rich refining skills, this so called 'Return Spring Pill' could merely be considered one of the first tier medicinal pills.

"Looks like these people from the 'Medicine Gang' don't even put in effort without the presence of any competition." Xiao Yan laughed faintly. He took out the other bottle of healing medicine. This kind of healing medicine was in a salve form and was dark-red in color. Xiao Yan placed it under his nose to sniff. He managed to differentiate the medicinal ingredients that were blended within. He could not help but immediately shrugged his shoulders.

Xiao Yan placed both kinds of medicinal pills back in their original spot. He turned his gaze toward the medicinal cauldron and his expression gradually became calm.

Once Xiao Yan entered into the state before he started refining medicine, he would be in an attentive condition. His gaze calmly stared at the medicinal cauldron in front of him as a thought rolled slightly in his mind. This time around, he planned to refine three types of medicinal pills. One type of the 'Energy Recover Pill' that enabled one to recover Dou Qi. This kind of medicinal pill was something that Xiao Yan had already practiced until he had reached the pinnacle. With his current medicine refining standard, he could at the very least maintain his success rate of refining the 'Energy Recovery Pill' at around eighty-percent.

The second type was a kind of healing medicine for one to orally consume. Its name was 'Body Recovery Pill.' This kind of medicinal pill not only had a certain healing effect on one's internal injuries, but it also had quite a good healing effect on external injuries. This kind of 'Body Recovery Pill' far exceeded that type of salve healing medicine the

‘Medicine Gang’ sold regardless of whether it was in terms of medicinal effect or tier. Moreover, the most crucial factor was that the medicinal ingredients that this kind of medicinal pill needed was even lesser than that salve healing medicine that the ‘Medicine Gang’ sold!

Xiao Yan had absolute confidence in this kind of healing medicine, which had low cost and great medicinal effects. As long as it was not a fool who had his head caught between the door, most people would know which to choose.

The third type of medicinal pill was named ‘Quiet Ice Pill.’ Upon the consumption of this kind of medicinal pill, one would be able to extremely effectively ease the doping of the Fire Poison. If one were to discuss its tier, the ‘Quiet Ice Pill’ could perhaps enter the peak of the second tier. Looking from a certain point of view... it would not be overboard to even say that this kind of medicinal pill was that of a third tier. This was because this kind of assistance medicinal pill, one that could help people train, had a value that far exceeded healing medicines and other kinds of medicinal pills.

This kind of medicinal pill would allow ‘Pan’s Gate’ to surpass the ‘Medicine Gang’ in one shot, creating a monopoly on the medicinal pill within the Inner Academy. This was because until now, the ‘Medicine Gang’ did not have a single medicinal pill that could resist the Fire Poison!

The medicinal formula for the three kinds of medicinal pill flashed across his mind. Xiao Yan sighed a deep breath of air. His expression gradually became solemn. He rubbed his fingers slightly and the green-colored flame instantly rose from the tip of his finger.

The curling green-colored flame was like a spirit as it jumped in a lively manner on Xiao Yan’s finger. Under the dancing of this fire spirit, the temperature within the secret room was slowly climbing...

Dark-black eyes stared intently at the rising green-colored flame. A long while later, Xiao Yan flicked his finger gently. The green-colored flame drew a distorted arc through the air. It passed through the fire outlet and abruptly burned and soared within. The high temperature grilled the

medicinal cauldron until it emitted a slight 'zi zi' sound.

Xiao Yan's eyes stared unblinkingly into the medicinal cauldron. His long finger slowly moved past the medicinal ingredient pile on the left side. Suddenly, his finger trembled. A couple of different types of medicinal ingredients were accurately clipped between his fingers.

With a gentle wave of his hand, a couple of medicinal ingredients were thrown into the medicinal cauldron where the green fire was rising. Following the entrance of the medicinal ingredients into the hot cauldron, the green-colored fire seedling was abruptly extended and it was completely swallowed...

There was not the slightest change in the expression on Xiao Yan's face as the medicinal ingredients were swallowed by the fire seedling. His palm faced the medicinal cauldron in the empty air in front of it. His long finger was flicked slightly. Following the flick of his finger, one could see that the green-colored flame within the medicinal cauldron suddenly began to dance. As the flame rose, a cluster of pure pill liquid was being refined as it was suspended on the top of the fire seedling.

Xiao Yan's eyes observed the suspended pill liquid indifferently. The hot temperature was repeatedly seeping out, expelling some of the remaining impurities within the pill liquid...

At this moment, Xiao Yan's Spiritual Strength had already penetrated the medicinal cauldron. Under the micromanagement of his Spiritual Strength, the temperature of the green-colored flame would rise and fall according to his thoughts. Under this perfect control, the pill liquid was culled until it was becoming increasingly pure...

Xun Er and the two others were sitting within the spacious hall. They were somewhat distracted while conversing with one another. Occasionally, their gazes would sweep toward a tightly shut door on the floor above. There was a faint anxiety in their eyes.

"It is fast approaching one and a half days... why has Xiao Yan not come out yet?" Wu Hao, who had become restless because of the pressuring atmosphere, finally could not resist as he took the lead to open his mouth

to speak.

“Let’s wait a little longer. We are all not alchemists. Therefore, we are also uncertain about the sequence for refining medicinal pill. However, we must not disturb Xiao Yan ge-ge no matter what...” Xun Er shook her head and spoke softly.

Hu Jia by the side could only helplessly sigh. The only thing that they could do was wait. Currently, nearly the entire ‘Pan’s Gate’ was waiting for Xiao Yan to come out. If he were to fail, it would be an extremely great blow for the morale of the members of ‘Pan’s Gate.’ After all, since they had come to be acquainted with the Xiao Yan, who had always appeared in the form of an ever victorious general in front of them, the latter had never failed... hopefully, this time around would not be an exception.

“Creak...”

The sound of a door opening suddenly rang out in the hall with an oppressive atmosphere. The three of them were startled. They immediately raised their heads and turned their gazes toward the originally tightly shut door, which was being slowly opened at this moment.

Xiao Yan slowly walked out under the gaze of the three people. That delicate and handsome face may be filled with fatigue, but the joy between his brows did indeed cause the three people in the hall to quietly relax their hearts, which were as tense as a cord. They exchanged glances with one another before sighing in relief.

Xiao Yan stood on the second story, and smiled toward the three people down in the hall. He swiftly walked down the stairs and came to the table in the middle of the hall. With a wave of his hand, a few hundred jade bottles instantly flashed and appeared, filling the entire table until it was full.

“Three types of medicinal pills. Eighty-three ‘Energy Recovery Pill,’ sixty-two ‘Body Recovery Pill,’ and thirty-six ‘Quiet Ice Pill.’ In total, there are one hundred eighty-one pills.” A brilliant smile surfaced on Xiao Yan’s face as he laughed out with a clear voice.

“So many...” The faces of the three people were shocked as they eyed the table which was filled with jade bottles. This was especially so after they heard the numbers that Xiao Yan had reported. A joy involuntarily surfaced between his brows.

“It is fortunate that I did not fail my orders. I can only rely on all of you for the matter of selling it after this. I am really burned out...” Xiao Yan sat down on the soft chair. His face was filled with a tiredness as he spoke softly to the three of them.

Xun Er and the other two nodded excitedly. The three of them swarmed to the side of the table and carefully counted the jade bottles.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge...” Xun Er turned around after discussing the selling procedures with the other two. She had just called out but was stunned when she eyed Xiao Yan, who was sleeping with his eyes tightly shut and had his hand supporting his head. She took out a soft blanket from beside her and covered it over Xiao Yan’s body. In a gentle voice, she said, “Sleep. Xiao Yan ge-ge, when you have awoken, Xun Er will report to you the good news...”

Chapter 495: Plentiful Gains

The sky had gradually become dark by the time Xiao Yan had woken from his deep sleep. The setting sun descending in the west scattered the pale-red light into the window, forming a dense light spot on the ground.

Xiao Yan sat up in the chair, and eyed the blanket that covered his body. His heart felt a slight warmth. He stood up and walked a little to move his body a little. After having slept until he was satisfied, the earlier tiredness had vanished. Replacing it was a face filled with energy.

“Creak...”

While Xiao Yan was walking back and forth, the door was suddenly gently pushed open. A human head was carefully extended inside. Upon seeing that Xiao Yan had woken up, he finally sighed in relief. He laughed and said, “Chief, you can really sleep. You have slept all the way from morning to night.”

“Ke ke, so it’s Atai.” Xiao Yan could not help but laugh softly when he saw the person who stuck his head out. He beckoned with his hand to ask the latter to come in and smiled as he asked, “Has Xun Er and the others not returned yet?”

“Ke ke, that’s right. Senior Xun Er and the others brought nearly everyone away from ‘Pan’s Gate.’ Looking at the time, however, they should be back soon.” Atai rubbed his head and smiled as he replied.

“It is really thanks to all of you this time around.” Xiao Yan lifted a cup of cold tea beside him and took a shallow sip before softly speaking to Atai with a smile.

“Chief, you are being too polite. Now, everyone is a member of ‘Pan’s Gate.’ All of the members have received your protection, how can we not do anything?” Atai responded awkwardly. He was shocked at the favor he felt when Xiao Yan voiced his thanks.

“Since I have decided to establish this ‘Pan’s Gate’ back then, I naturally need to take responsibility of all these matters. Once the medicinal pills

are sold, I will let Xun Er repay all of you twice the 'Fire Energy' that you all have donated. Business issues are business issues and personal issues are personal issues. They cannot be mixed." Xiao Yan shook his head and voiced his thoughts.

Hearing this, Atai was just about to defer the matter when he suddenly heard the sound of a large number of footsteps outside the door. His face immediately rejoiced. "Senior Xun Er and the rest are back!"

His words had just sounded when the door was once again pushed opened. A large group of joyous people swarmed in. Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao were leading them. From the looks of their happy faces, it appeared that they had quite a good result.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, you have awoken?" Xun Er chided everyone to be quiet upon entering the room when she saw Xiao Yan sitting in the chair. She immediately spoke happily.

"Yes." Xiao Yan smiled and nodded as he said, "Take a seat and rest first."

Seeing that Xiao Yan was still calm, Xun Er curled her lips into a shallow smile as she, along with the excited faced Wu Hao and Hu Jia, sat down beside Xiao Yan. The other members of 'Pan's Gate' sat on the ground because there were insufficient seats. In an instant, the originally spacious large hall was immediately packed until it was full.

Seeing that everyone had sat down, Xiao Yan finally turned his gaze toward Xun Er and smiled as he asked, "How was it?"

"Not bad..." Xun Er laughed softly before speaking, "We have sold thirty 'Energy Recovery Pills' and thirty-five 'Body Healing Pills.' As for the 'Quiet Ice Pills,' we have sold a lot less. We only sold fourteen of them... As there is the problem of credibility initially, we have decided that the 'Energy Recovery Pill' is priced at one day of 'Fire Energy' each, a little cheaper than the 'Return Spring Pill' of the 'Medicine Gang.' The 'Body Recovery Pill' is also priced at one day of 'Fire Energy' each. As for the 'Quiet Ice Pill,' it is priced at three days of 'Fire Energy' each. By counting in this manner, we have sold the pills for a total of one hundred seven

days of 'Fire Energy.' We are fast reaching the capital that we have taken out. Selling medicinal pills is indeed lucrative. No wonder alchemists are ultimately the most admired and envious occupation in the entire continent."

Xiao Yan brows were slightly knit when he initially heard the amount that was sold. His heart immediately felt relief as he spoke softly, "It is indeed considered not bad. Our 'Pan's Gate' is selling medicinal pills for the first time and does not have any credibility. It is very difficult for other people to trust the effects of the medicinal pills that we sell. The price does indeed need to be a little lower. As for that 'Quiet Ice Pill,' its price is a little high and an ordinary student would really be reluctant to purchase it."

Xiao Yan quietly laughed at the last few words that Xun Er spoke. If it was not because he had the help of the 'Heavenly Flame,' which greatly increased the success rate of forming pills, an ordinary alchemist would have difficulty obtaining this kind of profit even though they might be able to earn something.

"Originally, we never hoped that everyone would be able to purchase it..." Xun Er smiled and said, "Those ten students who purchased the 'Quiet Ice Pill' were quite strong. Moreover, they do not lack these three days of 'Fire Energy.' Therefore, they purchased it skeptically to try it. However, I think that after we wait one to two days, these medicinal pills might be snapped up in an instant."

"Yes." Xiao Yan nodded his head. As long as their credibility and the effect of the medicinal pill was spread around, it was likely that there would be people automatically coming to purchase even if they did not go out and sell.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, I suggest that we should first purchase the medicinal ingredients with all of the 'Fire Energy' that we have earned through the first batch... currently, the 'Medicine Gang' has not had a reaction due to our sudden actions. However, once they discover them, it is likely that they will take action." Xun Er hesitated for a moment before suggesting.

“You are afraid that the ‘Medicine Gang’ will quietly purchase all of the medicinal ingredients?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. His brows were immediately tightly knit together.

“No matter how one put it, the foundation of the ‘Medicine Gang’ is much firmer than ours. After selling medicinal pills for so many years, they have become so fat that they are overflowing with oil. If they really want to cut off the source of our medicinal pills, we would really have some trouble. After all, they... really have the financial ability. Hence, we must take precautions.” Xun Er voiced her thoughts.

“Ai, you are right.” Xiao Yan nodded heavily as he said in a deep voice, “We really cannot underestimate this ‘Medicine Gang.’ From tomorrow on, send everyone out to purchase the medicinal ingredients that we need!”

“Yes!”

Xiao Yan slowly exhaled a breath of air as he stood up. His gaze swept across the members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ within the hall. He smiled and said, “Everyone has worked hard. All the members that have participated in today’s sale will each be able to obtain five days of ‘Fire Energy!’ Once we have sold the medicinal pills! I, Xiao Yan, will do what I say and will not eat my words!”

“Long live the Chief!”

All the members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ in the hall were initially startled when they heard Xiao Yan speak of such a grand and great reward. Immediately, their faces were filled with a wild joy. Their excited roars nearly tore apart the ceiling. There were nearly forty to fifty members within ‘Pan’s Gate’. If each person was to be rewarded with five days of ‘Fire Energy,’ that meant that one had to take out over two hundred days of ‘Fire Energy.’ This generosity could be considered extremely lavish even if it was placed in the entire Inner Academy.

If it was in the past, Xiao Yan would naturally not be able to take out such a large sum. However, now that they were selling medicinal pills, and with his refining skills, ‘Fire Energy’ would sooner or later flow in

endlessly. Hence, he naturally did not need to be stingy.

“As for Atai and the others who donated ‘Fire Energy’ to purchase medicinal ingredients, they will be repaid twice the amount at that time. Remember, everyone is not allowed to refuse!” Xiao Yan once again turned his gaze toward Atai and the others as he spoke in a clear voice.

Those members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ could only smile bitterly and nod their heads after being blocked by Xiao Yan’s words. However, they were also a little moved as they smiled bitterly.

Xun Er and the other two could not help but exchange glances with one another as they eyed the high morale displayed by the members of ‘Pan’s Gate’ under Xiao Yan’s hefty reward. The morale was so high that it could not become any higher. After which, each of them quietly gave Xiao Yan a thumbs up.

On the second day, the members of ‘Pan Gate’ divided their workforce. Xun Er and the other two still led some people to sell medicinal pills while Xiao Yan led some people to the Exchange Area. He basically spent all of the ‘Fire Energy’ in his hands to purchase the necessary medicinal ingredients to refine the three kinds of medicinal pills. He then led everyone back to the new student area after he had bought enough.

The sale situation on Xun Er’s and the other’s side was nearly double what it was yesterday. Some of those people who had consumed the pleasantness of the medicinal pills quietly and secretly told their friends about it. Although they severely told the others not to spread around in their selfishness, the name of the three types of medicinal pills had already transmitted throughout the entire Inner Academy within just a short night. This was especially the case for the ‘Quiet Ice Pill.’ The effect of it, enabling one to increase the time one could train in the ‘Blazing Sky Qi Refining Tower,’ caused some people’s eyes to turn red on the spot.

By the time Xun Er and the rest returned after the second day, most of the first batch of medicinal pills that were refined had already been completely sold. The large amount of ‘Fire Energy’ that had reached their hands caused the entire ‘Pan’s Gate’ to descend into excitement.

Over ten people were seated in the spacious, luxurious large hall. The atmosphere was somewhat depressing, and had some faint dark waves flowing around. A man wearing an alchemist robe was sitting in the chair at the leader's position of a large table. There was an ancient medicinal cauldron drawn on his chest. The surface of the cauldron had four flashing ripples. The eye-piercing glow from it caused the other ten plus people in the room to lack the courage to look at him directly.

"Who can tell me just when an alchemist appeared in this 'Pan's Gate?'" The man finally opened his mouth slowly after the silent atmosphere continued for a long while. His low voice contained some anger. At this moment, three medicinal pills were placed in front of him. It was the three types of medicinal pills that Xiao Yan's group sold.

"Rumor has it that their leader, who is also that Xiao Yan, refined them..." A person below softly replied.

"He is actually also an alchemist?" The man knit his eyebrows and questioned.

"Ai... from the looks of it, he should be one."

"Each of these three types of medicinal pills is better than any of those that we sell. They are also cheaper..." The man stared at the medicinal pills in front of him and said in a dark and cold voice, "If we allow their reputation to spread completely, I'm afraid that our monopoly on the sale of medicinal pills will be directly overturned."

"What should we do now? We cannot just sit here and watch while they become stronger, right?" A person said in a somewhat fiery manner.

The man ignored the noise below. His finger gently tapped on the surface of the table. After a long while he finally said in a dark and cold voice, "Investigate the medicinal ingredients that they are purchasing. We will use twice the price to buy whatever they bought... Our 'Medicine Gang' does not have many things, but we do have a lot of 'Fire Energy.'"

"Yes sir!" Upon hearing their leader speak, the noisy people below immediately responded in unison.

“That’s right. ‘Pan’s Gate’ seems to have some conflict with the ‘White Gang’, right?” The man appeared to have recalled something as he said faintly.

“Yes, it is rumored that Xiao Yan had once defeated Fu Ao. Moreover, he publicly had a conflict with Bai Cheng...”

“Ke ke, what a group of arrogant new students... Go and find someone to invite Chief Bai Cheng over. I have some matters that I wish to discuss with him... This ‘Pan’s Gate’ really doesn’t know the immensity of the Heavens and Earth. Can one Xiao Yan overturn the sky?”

Chapter 496: Conflict

Xiao Yan eyed the number that had reached a high of three hundred forty-eight on his green Fire Crystal Card within the large hall. He was involuntarily a little absent-minded, and was filled with emotions. Now that they had this route of selling medicinal pills, the matter of being frustrated and distressed over 'Fire Energy' could be considered to have been thrown far behind him.

At this moment, Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao were also seated in the large hall. After two days of selling medicinal pills, their medicinal pills had also gained some reputation. Therefore, the current 'Pan's Gate' could be considered to have gradually got on track. Therefore, they did not need to personally show their faces during the sale. Instead, they simply just announced a specific selling place and let the members of 'Pan's Gate' wait there. All they needed to do was wait to collect the 'Fire Energy' at the end.

Seeing Xiao Yan's emotional manner, Xun Er laughed softly, "Although selling medicinal pills is indeed very lucrative, if we did not have Xiao Yan ge-ge's speed and success rate in refining medicinal pills, we would also be unable to achieve our current success. I have heard that even with the entire 'Medicine Gang' refining pills, their results after a day was only just a little better than the result of Xiao Yan ge-ge. Let's not even talk about the material resources first. Just the efforts of those people would have consumed a lot of human resources."

Xiao Yan smiled. He merely relied on the effects of the 'Heavenly Flame' and the help of Yao Lao by the side. He got up and stretched his lazy waist and began to feel a little bored. He had been refining medicinal pills unceasingly these few days. Now, the reserve medicinal pills that 'Pan's Gate' had was sufficient enough for them to sell for a week. Therefore, the current him had more resting time. This caused Xiao Yan, who was used to training, to feel a little uncomfortable. However, he had just broken through to the eight star not long ago. If he were to undertake a retreat again, it might be overkill and would yield poor results.

“Have the people that we sent out to purchase medicinal ingredients today not return?” Xiao Yan stuffed a cake into his mouth as he asked in a vague voice. The refining these few days had also used up most of the medicinal ingredients that they had purchased earlier.

“Ai, but they should be back soon.” Xun Er nodded slightly. However, her words had just sounded when a hurried knocking sounded outside. Immediately, a couple of human figures ran in.

“What is it? Atai?” Xiao Yan asked with some surprise as he saw Atai and the others panting.

“Chief, something happened!” Atai took in a deep breath. After he calmed his harried breathing, he finally spoke with a gloomy expression.

“What happened?” Xiao Yan frowned slightly. He swallowed the food in his mouth and his voice had also slowly become cold.

“The people who went to purchase medicinal ingredients today have all return empty-handed.” Atai said furiously.

“As expected... looks like the ‘Medicine Gang’ has taken action. However, the speed of their retaliation was so fast that it exceeded my expectations.” Xun Er bunched up her eyebrows and spoke coldly.

Xiao Yan’s eyes narrowed. Some cold glints flashed across them.

“Moreover, the brothers that we had sent out to sell medicinal pills were also blocked by other people. There were even some fiery-tempered brothers who wanted to resist, but were beaten by the other party until they were injured. Now, it is likely that the selling points were already destroyed.” Atai grit his teeth as he spoke of the final matter that caused him to be extremely furious.

TL: brothers here does not refer to blood brothers. Instead they are people from the same group

“What!?” The moment these words were spoken, the expressions of the four people in the room immediately became angry. Xiao Yan slammed the table on the spot and stood up. His expression was so dark and cold that it was like the prelude to a great storm.

“This ‘Medicine Gang’ actually dares to be so arrogant? Do they really think that our ‘Pan’s Gate’ is fun to bully?” Hu Jia’s pretty face was dark and solemn as she roared angrily.

“They are not people from the ‘Medicine Gang.’” Atai shook his head. He clenched his teeth and said, “According to the report by our brothers, those people that had come to create trouble appeared to be those fellows from the ‘White Gang!’”

“White Gang...” Xiao Yan was initially startled. A coldness immediately flashed across his face. Xiao Yan said thickly, “Those bastards. They certainly refuse to stop.”

“Chief, what should we do now? We cannot endure this matter!”

Xiao Yan’s expression was dark and solemn. He sensed the numerous fiery gazes looking at him within the large hall. A long while later, he waved his hand and said in a dark, cold voice, “Atai, go and gather everyone. Follow me to look for the ‘White Gang!’ Since they want to step on the head of our ‘Pan’s Gate,’ I must force them to take a beating too!”

“Alright! Chief, let’s finish them off!” Upon hearing that Xiao Yan did not cower once again, A wave of hot blood and flushed redness swarmed onto Atai’s face. He nodded heavily before dashing out of the pavilion house. After which, everyone heard his loud cries.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, are you planning to fight with the ‘White Gang’ now?” Xun Er mused for a moment before asking.

“Let’s just fight. During this period of time, ‘Pan’s Gate’ has received quite a lot of bullying from the ‘White Gang.’ If we continue to ignore it, it would not only increase their prestige but would also cause the heads of ‘Pan’s Gate’ to be pointed at and condemned as weak.” A fierceness flashed across Wu Hao’s face as he laughed coldly.

“Wu Hao is right. Even if we cannot defeat them, we would also let them know that our ‘Pan’s Gate’ isn’t meant to be trifled with!” Hu Jia’s almond eyes glared angrily as she cried out. Her character was originally that of someone who was afraid of nothing. During this period of time, she had held back a lot because she had only just entered the Inner Academy.

However, she could not allow the 'White Gang' to provoke and insult them repeatedly in this manner.

"The 'White Gang' has gone overboard this time around. If we still remain silent and do nothing, it would likely cause those injured brothers to become disillusioned." Xiao Yan's expression carried an angry green color as he nodded. A moment later, he turned toward Xun Er and said, "Xun Er, your suggestion of forming or hiring a group to harvest medicine that you proposed the last time might have to be brought forward. With the financial strength of the 'Medicine Gang,' we would have no strength to retaliate if they want to block our path of obtaining medicinal ingredients. Hence, we can only rely on ourselves."

"Yes!" Xun Er nodded slightly and said, "I will begin preparing for this tomorrow!"

Xiao Yan nodded. His expression was dark and cold as he said, "As for now, everyone will put down everything they are doing and follow me to the 'White Gang.' We will let those bastards in the 'White Gang' know that if they want to step on 'Pan's Gate,' which is full of thorns, it would be wishful thinking if their feet did not leave behind bloodstains..."

"Yes!"

The passersby coming and going on the spacious large road lined with trees eyed the large group of humans with steaming murderous auras. They involuntarily ceased their footsteps with faces filled with stunned looks. Most of this large group of people were holding shining weapons in their hands. The fierce look on their faces caused the people to the side to feel cold.

Only after they watched this large group of humans disappear from the edge of their sight did the road, which was shocked until it was completely silent, release waves of private whispers.

"What are these fellows planning to do? Their manner is like they have profound hatred. Are they planning to hack someone?"

"From the looks of the badge on their chest, they appear to be members of 'Pan's Gate,' right?"

“Uh? The ‘Pan’s Gate’ that recently started selling medicinal pills? Don’t tell me that the black-robed young man leading them is that Xiao Yan, who is rumored to have refined those medicinal pills?”

“I heard that the members of the ‘White Gang’ had made a mess of the ‘Pan’s Gate’ selling places. From the looks of it, ‘Pan’s Gate’ should be charging toward the ‘White Gang’ right? Hee hee, this time around, there is great fun to watch...”

The calm Inner Academy had become a little noisier because of ‘Pan’s Gate,’ which had suddenly become bloodthirsty. Many students adopted the intention of taking a look at the fun as each of them ran around and told one another. In a short while, it attracted most of the curious people as they swarmed over to where the ‘White Gang’ was. After all, this kind of large scale great faction battle was extremely rare despite there being quite a lot of fights in the Inner Academy.

“Bad news, Chief!”

The door to a room bursting with unceasing laughter was suddenly pushed open. A human figure rushed in somewhat hastily as he shouted loudly.

“What is the matter that causes you to be so panicked?” Bai Cheng, who was in the leader’s chair, frowned slightly as he spoke unhappily. Yesterday, the ‘Medicine Gang’ offered a price that caused him to be extremely attracted merely to get him to cause trouble with ‘Pan’s Gate.’ He originally had great dislike for ‘Pan’s Gate’. How would he not be happy now that there was someone who was willing to pay a hefty price to get them to strike? Therefore, he had promised to undertake it the moment the other party opened its mouth.

As long as they got the support of the ‘Fire Energy’ of the ‘Medicine Gang,’ Bai Cheng would be able to exchange it for the scroll of a powerful Dou Technique from the Dou Technique Hall. At that time, his position on the ‘Strong Ranking’ would likely be able to move up a little. Having his thoughts interrupted by the shouting of someone at this moment naturally caused him to not have a nice expression.

“Xiao Yan has led the members of the ‘Pan’s Gate’ to come charging over toward us, the ‘White Gang!’”

Bai Cheng was initially slightly startled when he heard this. An instant later, however, his expression suddenly changed drastically after he recovered. He suddenly stood up and coldly laughed, “It is really unexpected that this brat has such a bloody character. However, it is like a chicken egg colliding with a rock. He is simply asking for it!”

“‘Pan’s Gate,’ which does not even have a single ‘Dou Ling,’ wants to have a big fight with us, the ‘White Gang?’ Chief, the last time it was because of me that caused us to not be allowed to touch them for half a year. Now that they have come and looked for us by themselves, this bet would naturally be useless!” Fu Ao’s face was flushed red as he stood up and laughed out loud.

Bai Cheng glanced indifferently at the extremely happy Fu Ao before he coldly laughed, “You should also not be too careless. It is rumored that that fellow’s fire lotus Dou Technique is something that even Lei Na is no match for. I’m afraid that even in a head on fight, you would be unable to defeat him.”

Fu Ao’s face slightly reddened when he heard Bai Cheng’s words. His mouth remained tough as he spoke, “That kind of Dou Technique may be strong, but it appears that with his strength, using it once a day is perhaps his limit. As long as I can endure one wave, won’t he be like a cluster of soft clay without any resistance, allowing me to mold as I please?”

“What is the use of saying this now. Immediately gather our people. Since ‘Pan’s Gate’ has come and looked for trouble with great fanfare, our ‘White Gang’ cannot show even the slightest sign of being timid. Otherwise, how will we survive in the Inner Academy?” Bai Cheng scolded once before he let out a sharp cry.

“Yes!”

Everyone in the room immediately responded in unison upon hearing Bai Cheng’s order. They immediately charged out of the room. They began to shout out loud to gather the members of the gang.

A cold aura drew over Bai Cheng's face as he heard the chaotic noisiness outside. He said with a cold smile, "Since you have come looking for us yourself, you should not blame me. This time around, if I do not cause all of you to lose your reputation in the Inner Academy, I would disgrace my ranking on the 'Strong Ranking.' A group of novices who do not know the immensity of the Heavens and the Earth!"

Once he said this, Bai Shan brushed his sleeves. His face contained some cold ridicule as he strode out of the room...

Chapter 497: Han Xian of the Medicine Gang

Not far from the entrance of the 'White Gang' was a spacious open area. At this moment, this open space that was empty for a long time was being surrounded by a crowd that came from every direction until it was bustling.

Numerous gazes that contained various emotions were emitted from the crowd. There were also numerous private whispers, eyeing the people from the two groups which were facing off against each other.

One of the two groups present in the open ground had more people than the other. There were at least forty to fifty people clustered together. Just this imposing presence without mentioning any other thing was sufficient to let others feel surprise. The other side, on the other hand, had fewer people. From a rough count, they had around thirty people. However, regardless of whether it was in terms of aura or their expression, these thirty plus people did not show any sign of being frightened just because the other side had more people. Instead, each of them was more arrogant than the other. The intention to provoke within their eyes was extremely rich.

"Xiao Yan, are you thinking of giving the 'White Gang' a blow by leading so many people over today?" Bai Cheng hugged his arms and laughed mockingly at Xiao Yan from the leader's spot in front of the 'White Gang.' Behind him stood Bai Shan, Fu Ao, and the two others. From the looks of the aura of the other two people, it seemed that they were all elite Dou Lings with similar strength as Fu Ao.

"Bai Cheng, our 'Pan's Gate' has never provoked you, but you have stopped our 'Pan's Gate' from selling medicinal pills. Isn't this going too far?" Xiao Yan's face was somewhat gloomy. The coldness in his voice was something that anyone could easily identify.

"The Inner Academy has never restricted fighting. These kinds of small troubles happen everyday. What is there to make a fuss about? If you want

to blame someone, then blame yourself for not having strength.” Bai Cheng rolled his eyes and spoke indifferently.

“From the looks of this situation, the ‘White Gang’ is intending on taking the lead in destroying the agreement back then. Ah. I really did have some wishful thinking. I naively thought that even with your terrible character, you would at least be able to keep your promises... from the looks of it now, you are actually all just a third rate gang without any integrity, credibility, or face.” Xiao Yan spread out his hands and softly laughed. His laughter was filled with ridicule that the people around could hear. Immediately, laughter burst from the crowd around. After all, quite a number of students in the Inner Academy had heard of the promise that Fu Ao had given to Xiao Yan back then.

Bai Cheng’s face became much uglier after hearing the laughter from around him. His eyes were dark and cold as he eyed Xiao Yan and said, “Looks like other than being remarkable at relying on women, your mouth is also eloquent. Back then, the agreement did indeed state that we would not randomly find trouble with the ‘Pan’s Gate.’ Hei. However, this does not include being requested by another person to teach you, this group of arrogant new students, a lesson...”

“Being requested by another? Who is giving you the request?” Xiao Yan’s eyes solidified as he coldly laughed.

“I have nothing to say.” Bai Cheng still laughed coldly. He twisted his neck slightly as his eyes harbored malicious thoughts as he eyed Xiao Yan’s group. He said thickly, “Since you have all come here today, I think that the agreement is already useless. Since that is the case, don’t blame my ‘White Gang’ for using its bigger strength to bully the weak!”

“Why don’t you come and try?” Xiao Yan’s eyes were as dark and cold as a snake. He moved his right hand slightly and an enormous Heavy Xuan Ruler flashed and appeared. Today, he had already made up his mind. If it really reached that stage, he would beat this bastard until he was seriously injured even if he had to display the ‘Flame Splitting Tsunami.’

“Oh... how lively?”

However, just as the anger in Xiao Yan's heart gradually surged, a familiar mocking voice was suddenly emitted from the human crowd. Immediately, a gray figure flashed and appeared like a ghost before finally appearing in front of Xiao Yan's group.

"Lin Yan?" Xiao Yan was startled when he saw the person who had come. He immediately frowned slightly. "Why have you come?"

"Such a lively matter has basically spread throughout the entire Inner Academy. I naturally needed to come and take a look..." Lin Yan shrugged his shoulders toward Xiao Yan as he smiled and replied. He had just completed his adherence to the procedure to expel the Fire Poison today when he heard of the rumors. Moreover, he had always claimed to owe Xiao Yan a favor. Therefore, after he hesitated for a moment, he hurried over toward the 'White Gang.'

Lin Yan's appearance naturally invoked a commotion within the surrounding crowd. With his status within the Inner Academy, there was nearly no one who did not know him. Moreover, from the looks of this situation, it appeared that he was on quite familiar terms with Xiao Yan. In an instant, private conversations involuntarily began to spread. Those gazes which were originally filled with pity toward the 'Pan's Gate' had become much dimmer. With Lin Yan's help, it was likely that the 'White Gang' would not have such great courage... after all, the name of Crazy Axe Lin Yan was not someone that Bai Cheng could compare with.

Bai Cheng's expression had similarly changed when he saw Lin Yan, who had suddenly appeared. This was especially the case after he saw him smile while conversing with Xiao Yan. Bai Cheng's expression became extremely ugly after that. Lin Yan was a top expert who was ranked tenth in the 'Strong Ranking.' His strength naturally far exceeded Bai Cheng's, who was ranked thirty plus.

"Lin Yan, this is a private matter between my 'White Gang' and 'Pan's Gate.' You..." Bai Cheng's expression may be ugly, but he was unwilling to shrink back just like this. He immediately took a step forward, cupped his hands toward Lin Yan and spoke in a deep voice.

“There is no need for any nonsense. I owe Xiao Yan a favor. Naturally, I will need to help them. If you want to touch them, you can only ask the ‘Distant Fire Axe’ in my hand.” Lin Yan curled his lips and did not say any courteous words. He flicked his hand and a red-colored giant axe that was five feet long appeared in his hand. As the giant axe was randomly waved, the sharp blade of the axe cut open the air, leaving behind a faint red glow.

“You...” Being blocked by Lin Yan’s words, Bai Cheng was momentarily dull. His heart wanted to be angry, but when he thought of Lin Yan’s strength, he could only swallow the words that had reached his throat. He could only turn his gaze toward Xiao Yan and speak with a furious smile, “Xiao Yan, when can you not rely on others? The last time it was Han Yue. This time it is Lin Yan. Who will you invite the next time?”

“Do you even want your face? How long has it been since you entered the Inner Academy? How long has it been since Xiao Yan’s group entered the Inner Academy? You act as though you are so strong and arrogant in front of ‘Pan’s Gate,’ which was just established. If you have the ability, you can go and fight with Lin Xiuya’s ‘Wolf Teeth’ now. If you dare to go, I would also not stop you from getting rid of ‘Pan’s Gate’ in whichever manner you want. Should you not have the guts, you can just get lost. You are still debating here and there. Are you trying to provoke Xiao Yan to fight one-on-one against you? If the both of you have stayed in the Inner Academy for a similar period of time, I would not be creating trouble for you here.” Lin Yan’s expression sunk as he scolded Bai Cheng in a somewhat sarcastic manner until the latter’s expression turned green.

The observers around the open ground were also choked quite badly by these words. In their hearts, they quietly said that this fellow was worthy of being the craziest person in the entire Inner Academy. When he spoke, he actually did not give anyone face. Asking Bai Cheng to go and find trouble with Lin Xiuya. It was likely that Bai Cheng would rather give himself a tight slap than to be foolish enough to perform such a thing.

Xiao Yan was neither able to laugh nor cry as he was protected by Lin Yan. This fellow’s words were quite vicious. However, he felt such comfort

after hearing them.

“Yo, it is indeed Crazy Axe Lin Yan. This realm of scolding people and finding trouble is indeed something that no one in the Inner Academy can match.” A somewhat cold ridiculing laugh was suddenly emitted. Everyone turned their gazes only to see that an empty path had been formed from the parting of the human crowd. A large group of people wearing Alchemist robes swaggered into the open ground. At the front of this group of people was a man who had some ridicule hanging on the corner of his mouth. The earlier cold laughter should have been emitted by him.

“Huh? Isn’t this the ‘Medicine Gang?’ Why have they also become involved?”

“Is the one leading them the chief of the ‘Medicine Gang,’ Han Xian? It is really unexpected that he has also appeared.”

“From Han Xian’s tone, it appears that he is here to help brace the power of the ‘White Gang.’ Now, there is a really good show to see. ‘Pan’s Gate’ has Lin Yan while the ‘White Gang’ has Han Xian...”

Bai Cheng’s green face immediately revealed some joy upon seeing this group of Alchemists who had walked into the open ground. The ‘Medicine Gang’ possessed quite a high position in the Inner Academy. There were usually many experts on the ‘Strong Ranking’ who had some relationship with them. Hence, if one was to discuss factions which were not to be trifled with, it was undoubtedly the ‘Medicine Gang’ besides the few factions established by those abnormally strong fellows in the top spots of the ‘Strong Ranking.’

“Hei, so it’s you, the one who has been selling fake medicine...” Han Xian’s appearance similarly caused Lin Yan to frown slightly. However, a similar voice full of ridicule was emitted soon after.

Han Xian was not too concerned about Lin Yan’s ridicule. His gaze leaped passed the later before colliding with Xiao Yan’s gaze behind. The four eyes interacted and some sparks were shot out.

“Ke ke, this person must be the chief of ‘Pan’s Gate’, the Xiao Yan who refined the three types of medicinal pills, right? It is really unexpected that

you are also an Alchemist.” After they looked at each other for a moment, laughter was emitted from Han Xian’s mouth.

Xiao Yan stared at the Han Xian in front of him indifferently. His gaze swept over the four silver-colored ripples on the latter’s chest. Surprise flashed across his face. It was really unexpected that this fellow was really a tier four alchemist. After the surprise flashed passed, a cold smile surfaced, “Senior Han Xian. I think that the person who hired the ‘White Gang’ to find trouble with us ‘Pan’s Gate’ should be the ‘Medicine Gang,’ no?”

Xiao Yan’s words caused Han Xian’s eyebrows to be lifted slightly. The latter did not admit to it, but merely said in a slow and orderly manner, “Why doesn’t ‘Pan’s Gate’ think about what taboo actions they performed which resulted in having such an ending? Since you are all new students, you should be law-abiding during your first year. If your appetite is too big, you will only eat to your death.”

“Senior, thank you for your reminder. However, whether I eat to my death or I grow fat because of it, one will only know after one does it.” Xiao Yan coldly laughed in the face of the little hidden threat and warning of Han Xian.

“Unfortunately, you don’t have the chance to eat until you become large. The ‘White Gang’ is sufficient to cause ‘Pan’s Gate’ to lose all its reputation, yet you still want to eat until you become bigger?” Han Xian laughed softly.

“Han Xian, after hearing the meaning behind your words, are you truly the ones who got the ‘White Gang’ to attack ‘Pan Gate?’” Lin Yan frowned and asked to the side.

“Lin Yan, I advise you not to meddle in the affairs of others. Although you are ranked tenth in the ‘Strong Ranking,’ you should clearly know that the tenth is not the first. There are still the nine people in front of you who are stronger. If you really want to forcefully stand up for someone else, I can only invite the people in front of you to come and finish you off. Although the price is expensive, our ‘Medicine Gang’ can still afford it!”

Han Xian's expression sunk slightly as he coldly cried out.

Hearing this, Lin Yan's expression similarly became dark and solemn in an instant. He had just opened his mouth to curse when Xiao Yan stopped him.

"Big Brother Lin Yan, leave these matters to me." Xiao Yan smiled at Lin Yan. He slowly took a step forward in front of everyone's gazes and looked directly at Han Xian. He said in a faint voice, "I know that you are afraid that I will sever your lucrative source of revenue. However, by just relying on this suppression of yours, it will merely have a temporary effect. As long as I, Xiao Yan, have my hands and legs, I will be able to continue refining. Moreover, there will naturally be people who will distinguish the medicinal pill advantage that 'Pan's Gate' has over the 'Medicine Gang.' At that time, these measures of the 'Medicine Gang' will still be useless."

"Is that so?" The corner of Han Xian's mouth was raised slightly. His eyes were increasingly icy-cold.

"However, it is also possible for our 'Pan's Gate' to completely give it up and not get involved in the sale of medicinal pills! That is as long as you agree to a suggestion of mine." A cold smile suddenly surfaced on Xiao Yan's face as he eyed Han Xian on the opposite side.

Chapter 498: Compete

“Suggestion? What suggestion?”

Han Xian was startled for quite awhile upon hearing these words of Xiao Yan. It appeared that it was totally beyond the former's expectations. It was a long while later before he asked in a somewhat cautious manner.

“Since all of us are Alchemists, it does not really suit our status for us to fight openly with real weapons like ordinary people... Therefore, if Senior Han Xian has the ability, we can use the Alchemist's method of doing things and have a showdown. If I lose, ‘Pan's Gate’ will not even be slightly involved in the sale of medicinal pills. However, if you are to lose, please withdraw all the covert things. How about it?” Xiao Yan flicked his sleeves, looked directly at Han Xian and laughed clearly

“You want to compete with me in terms of refining pills?” Han Xian was once again startled as he involuntarily mocked. His pill refining skills could be considered among the top not just within the entire Inner Academy, but even within the entire Alchemist Department. The rank of a tier four alchemist was sufficient for him to look down upon the alchemists in a similar age group as him.

“Of course, if Senior Han Xian likes to use Dou Qi to compete, I will also not reject.” The corner of Xiao Yan's mouth was lifted into a cold smile as he spoke. Although Han Xian's strength was of the Dou Ling class, he was at the most around that of Lei Na from the looks of his Qi. If they were to really fight head on, if Xiao Yan used a small scale ‘Angry Buddha Lotus Flame,’ which had shocked Lei Na into losing his fighting spirit, this Han Xian would likely be not much better.

Han Xian had similarly heard rumors of Xiao Yan's shocking fighting strength. Therefore, he would naturally not agree to use Dou Qi to fight with Xiao Yan. He was not afraid if they were to compete in pill refining skills. However, he could not help but take some precaution since this suggestion was first spoken from Xiao Yan's mouth. For a moment, he was actually not very certain of how to reply.

“The ‘Energy Recovery Pill,’ ‘Body Recovery Pill,’ and ‘Quiet Ice Pill’ may have quite good medicinal effects. However, his techniques appears somewhat coarse. If the medicinal formula for these three medicinal pills are given to me, the medicinal pill that I would refine would likely be of better quality compared to him.” A thought swiftly circulated in Han Xian’s heart. However, he had forgotten that Xiao Yan had refined so many medicinal pills by himself. Regardless of how exquisite the refining techniques was, they would all become much more coarse.

“Why? Do you not dare to accept, Senior Han Xian? Ke ke, if word were to be spread around, I’m afraid that it would not be very good for the reputation of your ‘Medicine Gang’...” Xiao Yan could not help but laugh coldly and mock when he saw Han Xian changing his expression as he hesitated.

“You need not incite me. It is useless.” Han Xian coldly glanced at Xiao Yan. He was not a fool and could see Xiao Yan’s intention with a glance.

“It is fine if you want to compete pill refining skills with me. However, the stakes are too small.” After a few thoughts flashed across his heart like lightning, Han Xian suddenly spoke, “How about this? If you are to lose in the competition, not only is ‘Pan’s Gate’ not allowed to sell medicinal pills, but you also have to hand over the medicinal formula for the ‘Energy Recovery Pill,’ ‘Body Recovery Pill,’ and ‘Quiet Ice Pill.’ If I lose, not only will I not block your sales, but I will also hand over the five exchange sites with the highest human traffic within the Inner Academy to your ‘Pan’s Gate’! Our ‘Medicine Gang’ has spent around eight hundred days of ‘Fire Energy’ in total in order to purchase these five sites from the Inner Academy. It is far better than those random exchange sites of yours. Therefore, you will not lose out.”

“Ah... it is really unexpected that Senior Han Xian has taken a fancy to the medicinal formula in my hands. What good calculations.” Xiao Yan mocked laughingly.

“Do you dare, or do you not dare?” Han Xian was not angry despite having his thoughts exposed. He simply cried out with a cold laugh.

“Alright, since Senior Han Xian has such a fierce will, I, Xiao Yan will likely carry the name of a weakling if I am to shrink back.” Xiao Yan waved his hand and spoke faintly, “It is just that I do not know how Senior Han Xian wants to compete?”

“Follow the same medicinal formula and take out the cauldron to refine at the same time. Let’s see whose medicinal pill quality is better after the pill is formed!” Han Xian spoke in a deep voice.

“Alright. However, whose medicinal formula will we use?” Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and asked.

“If we use each other’s medicinal formula, it is likely that both of us will have doubts in our hearts.” Han Xian said calmly, “Therefore, I suggest that we use a medicinal formula that is stashed within the Inner Academy. Coincidentally, I have met Elder Hao, the elder in charge of medicinal formulas. This time, we can borrow a medicinal formula from his elderly self. We can also invite him to become the judge at the same time. What do you say?”

“Elder Hao? Someone acquainted with you?” Xiao Yan frowned slightly as he spoke.

“You need not suspect that this elder might collude with me. I don’t have that kind of ability. Lin Yan by your side could not know any better about the character of this Elder Hao. Within the entire Inner Academy, it is likely that this Elder is the most impartial one.” Han Xian clearly knew about Xiao Yan’s doubt as he opened his mouth to laugh coldly.

“Yes. What he said is true. That Elder Hao is indeed a good choice. Deceptions and fraud are the things he hates the most.” Lin Yan nodded and explained when he saw Xiao Yan looking over.

“This... alright.” Xiao Yan mused for a moment before raising his head and smiling as he spoke to Han Xian, “Let’s go and find that Elder Hao after this. Once we have negotiated everything, let us compete to see who is better at the northern stadium tomorrow. What do you say?”

“I really anticipate your three medicinal formula.” A faint disdain was lifted from the corner of his mouth. He waved his hand and walked out of

the open ground.

“I also anticipate the selling locations of your ‘Medicine Gang.’” Xiao Yan smiled coldly. His gaze suddenly turned toward Bai Cheng and said faintly, “Senior Bai Cheng, our ‘Pan’s Gate’ will remember your ‘favor’ of smashing the selling area of our ‘Pan’s Gate.’ We will get everything back in the future.”

“Hee hee, as long as you do not rely on anyone at that time, I will take you on anytime.” Bai Cheng rolled his eyes and mocked.

Xiao Yan smiled faintly. Now that he had the instigator of the entire incident, he would naturally need to find him to take revenge. This ‘White Gang’ could be put behind...

After Xiao Yan and the others left the open ground, they went to the medicinal formula management and storage area together with Han Xian’s group. After telling Elder Hao about the competition, the latter displayed quite a bit of interest. Openly fighting with real weapons was basically something that happened everyday within the Inner Academy. However, something like this kind of pill refining competition was extremely rare. Therefore, upon hearing that Xiao Yan and Han Xian needed to borrow a medicinal formula from that place, Elder Hao agreed to it without even the slightest hesitation.

However, this Elder Hao had similarly raised a condition. That was that the medicinal formula would be personally selected by him. Xiao Yan and Han Xian were initially a little stunned by this condition, but they finally could only helplessly nod their heads. After which, each of them returned to their residence. They had already agreed to see who was better at the northern stadium the next day.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, that Han Xian appears to have some confidence...” Xun Er said with some worry on the way back.

“He naturally has some confidence. As a dignified tier four alchemist, he would be able to enjoy the treatment of a strong Dou Wang no matter where he is at. Moreover, with his ability, he would be among one of the best when placed among the Alchemist Department. After arriving in the

Inner Academy for three years, there is seldom anyone who can invite him to refine pills now. This was after the initial two years in which he frequently refined medicinal pills.” Lin Yan curled his lips and said.

“Yes. By being able to reach a tier four alchemist at such an age his training talent can indeed be considered outstanding.” Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. He did not refute it.

“Do you have any chance of winning?” Wu Hao frowned slightly and asked. Now that they had tasted the pleasant flavor of the fiery profits from the medicinal pills, they were naturally unwilling to give up this enormous cake.

Xiao Yan merely curled his lips under the observation of everyone. He placed both hands behind him and slowly stepped forward. It was a long while later before he laughed and softly said, “Isn’t it just a mere tier four alchemist? What is there to be afraid of? Wait and see his expression tomorrow.”

The footsteps of Lin Yan and the rest paused when they heard these words of Xiao Yan, which contained a confidence that was borderline arrogant. They exchanged glances with one another, and could only shake their heads with a bitter smile. What other methods did they have now that things had developed to such a stage? In just one short night, the news of Xiao Yan of ‘Pan’s Gate’ competing with Han Xian in refining pills appeared to have grown wings as it spread throughout the entire Inner Academy.

The Inner Academy immediately filled with interest and excitement under this shocking news. Similarly, the Inner Academy may have students fighting daily, but something like this pill refining competition was extremely rare. Therefore, nearly all the students had great curiosity for this competition. Moreover, some of the Elders in the Inner Academy who were bored from having nothing to do had also become a little curious after hearing about this competition. The name Xiao Yan was something that they had heard until they were familiar with during this period of time...

The first rays of sunlight in the morning finally slowly scattered down from the horizon under the expectations of countless people. They wrapped around the entire enormous Inner Academy hidden deep in the mountains...

The Inner Academy had four stadiums, namely the North, South, East, and West. Each stadium could accommodate thousands of people. The location of Xiao Yan's and Han Xian's competition was placed in the Northern Stadium.

Today, the Northern Stadium, which usually had hardly anyone, was packed with a large crowd of people until it was full. The noisy sound was nearly even more fiery than that of the Fighting Arena. As they eyed the black clusters of heads in the arena, some Elders who had secretly come to watch involuntarily sighed. The Inner Academy's Trading Area, Fight Arena, and other special places did not appear to be this lively,

“Dong!”

A clear gong sound suddenly, but slowly resonated throughout the stadium. Following the sound of this gong, the surrounding noise immediately became much quieter.

As countless numbers of gazes focused in the arena at the center of the stadium, an elderly human figure flashed and appeared. From the looks of his appearance, he was that Elder Hao.

Elder Hao's gaze slowly swept over the black masses in the stadium. His gaze would occasionally pause at some areas. Immediately, a smile involuntarily surfaced in his eyes, “These Elders are really unable to restrain themselves any longer...”

“Cough”

A hoarse coughing sound was emitted from Elder Hao as he immediately suppressed all the noise in the stadium.

Following the quieting noise, a human figure wearing an Alchemist robe suddenly flashed onto the platform. After which, he stood beside Elder Hao without moving. One could see the extremely flashy four silver-

colored ripples on his chest. Clearly, he was the leader of the 'Medicine Gang,' Han Xian.

The moment Han Xian showed himself, waves of cries sounded from the audience. It appeared that this fellow did indeed possess quite a great reputation in the Inner Academy.

Not long after Han Xian ascended onto the platform, a pathway suddenly opened up in the crowd. A smiling black-robed young man slowly walked forward under the numerous bizarre gazes around him. Finally, he got into the arena alone and bowed toward everyone. His posture was calm and indifferent, causing some people who were quietly watching him, to praise him in their hearts.

Chapter 499: The Competition Topic - Dragon Strength Pill

Under the countless gazes in the audience, the two human figures in the arena stood and raised their heads proudly. They straightened their bodies as they set off different auras. It was clear that they both had an imposing presence. The eyes of quite a number of females of the Inner Academy in the audience flickered slightly.

Elder Hao was wearing plain clothes as he stood between Xiao Yan and Han Xian. Although his hair was white, his other aspects had a sturdiness that did not lose to a young person. He may possess a smile on his face due to the atmosphere today, on a face with some wrinkles, but from the looks of the faint sharpness in his eyes, this Elder Hao really did give off the impartial feeling that Lin Yan had mentioned.

As Elder Hao coughed softly once again, his voice which contained powerful Dou Qi suppressed the voices in the entire stadium. His gaze looked over the entire stadium before he took out a slightly yellowed ancient scroll from his storage ring in a slow but orderly manner. He smiled faintly and said, "The old me has always had great interest in the refining of pills. However, due to the harsh conditions of an alchemist, I could only quietly give it up. Today, I am extremely happy to come and be the judge of this extremely rare pill refining competition that has appeared in this Inner Academy. However, everyone also knows about the usual reputation of this old me. Therefore, you can throw away those doubts about the fairness of this competition."

Everyone in the stadium immediately emitted waves of responding voices upon hearing Elder Hao's voice. Clearly, the impartial reputation that he possessed in the Inner Academy was something that everyone knew about.

"The topic for today's competition is personally chosen by this old me. Until this moment, Xiao Yan and Han Xian are still unclear what they need to refine." The response from the stadium caused the smile on Elder

Hao's face to increase a little. His hand gently patted the scroll. After which, he turned his head and smiled as he said to Xiao Yan and Han Xian, "I will say this beforehand. This test question is a little difficult... I wonder if the both of you dare to accept it?"

Xiao Yan and Han Xian were slightly startled when they heard this. They exchanged glances with one another before Han Xian took the lead in cupping his heads. He smiled and said, "I will definitely do my best no matter what kind of test question Elder Hao has chosen." He believed that he, as a tier four alchemist, could barely and forcefully refine a tier five medicinal pill when he was at peak condition. Of course, his chances of success were a little too low. Moreover, even if the test question that Elder Hao had chosen belonged to the kind of extremely difficult level, he believed that even if he lost, he would definitely be better than Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan to the side smiled slightly. He similarly nodded without any objections.

"Good. The both of you have quite a strong pride. As the manager of the Inner Academy's medicinal formula storage, I also have the right to take out the medicinal formula. Today, in order to thank the both of you in displaying refining skills that will be an eye-opener for all of us, this medicinal formula will be given to the both of you as a gift." Elder Hao stroked his beard and smiled. He waved the scroll at the two of them and smiled as he asked, "Who will be the first to read?"

"I will allow Senior Han Xian to be first." Xiao Yan smiled and said.

"Since that is the case, thank you very much, Junior Xiao Yan." Han Xian smiled faintly and did not reject the offer. He received the scroll from Elder Hao and slowly opened it. His eyes were gradually shut as his Spiritual Strength broke out of his body and invaded the scroll, obtaining the extremely complicated medicine refining information.

Under the gazes of everyone, the smile on Han Xian's face was gradually withdrawn as the information on the medicinal formula was imprinted into his mind. At the end, there was even an ugly look within it.

Waves of private whispers immediately sounded within the stadium

upon seeing the change in Han Xian's expression. The many gazes were filled with doubts. Clearly, they were unclear just what had happened.

"It appears that there is something wrong..." Hu Jia, who was in the stadium, frowned as she spoke to Xun Er and the others by her side.

"Let's watch first..." Some uncertainty also flashed in Xun Er's heart. However, she still forcefully remained calm as she replied and smiled.

In the arena, Xiao Yan also knit his eyebrows together at the sight of Han Xian's expression. Looking at the situation, it appeared that there was some problem with the medicinal formula... was the medicinal formula really extremely difficult as Elder Hao had said? Moreover, it was so difficult to the point that even Han Xian, this tier four alchemist, would reach the point where his expression became extremely ugly?

Under the countless numbers of doubtful gazes in the open ground, Han Xian finally withdrew his Spiritual Strength from the medicinal formula after a while. He returned the medicinal formula to Elder Hao as he forcefully smiled and said, "The test question that Elder has chosen is indeed difficult. Han Xian can only do his best."

"Young people always need to challenge their limits." Elder Hao smiled. There was a faint craftiness in his smile. He held the medicinal formula before turning around and handing it to Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan received the medicinal formula. He did not hesitate as he opened it. His Spiritual Strength swiftly encroached upon it.

Seeing Xiao Yan take the medicinal formula, an involuntary cold smile flashed across the eyes of Han Xian at the side. This medicinal formula was something that he could only helplessly smile at, much less just you, Xiao Yan.

Han Xian eyed Xiao Yan somewhat gloatingly. He anticipated the scene of his expression becoming ugly. However, after two minutes had passed, the ugly expression similar to his earlier did not appear on Xiao Yan's face. There was merely an additional solemnness and surprise.

"This fellow is extremely shrewd. He is actually able to hide so

ingeniously under this kind of shocking situation. Humph. However, this kind of illusionary action will naturally break without any need for an attack when it comes to refining the pill.” The calmness that Xiao Yan displayed caused Han Xian to frown a little. He could only mock with a cold smile in his heart.

“Looks like the situation isn’t very terrible...” At the bottom of the stadium, Xun Er sighed in relief within her heart as she smiled and spoke when she saw the solemnness that surfaced on Xiao Yan’s face.

To her side, Hu Jia, Wu Hao, and Lin Yan spread their hands. It was pointless to say anything more, since the pill refinement had yet to reach the end.

Under the focus of all the gazes in the stadium, Xiao Yan also withdrew his Spiritual Strength from the medicinal formula after a couple of minutes. He rubbed his somewhat swollen head from being stuffed with such a large amount of information before returning the medicinal formula to Elder Hao. He smiled and softly spoke, “Elder Hao really makes things difficult for us. This tier five medicinal pill is something that even an ordinary tier five alchemist would not have a high success rate with.”

“Tier five medicinal pill?”

All the audience in the stadium involuntarily let out a surprised ‘wow’ when they heard the words from Xiao Yan’s mouth. Only at this moment did they understand why Han Xian’s expression turned so ugly earlier. A tier five medicinal pill. It was a tier that only a tier five alchemist could encroach on. Although he was a tier four alchemist, he would undoubtedly have a failure rate of over seventy-to-eighty-percent when refining this kind of medicinal pill.

“Ke ke, since you are going to compete, it is natural that you want to compete with something bigger... This tier five medicinal pill is indeed a little difficult to refine. However, if it is really not possible, you would at the very most fail in your refinement.” Elder Hao smiled and replied.

Xiao Yan was speechless. The medicinal pill that was recorded in the medicinal formula was a tier five medicinal pill named ‘Dragon Strength

Pill.’ This kind of medicinal pill could allow the person consuming it to possess an extremely great strength for a short period of time. This kind of strength had nothing to do with the increase in Dou Qi. Instead, it was an extremely pure physical strength. Therefore, this ‘Dragon Strength Pill’ belonged to the type of medicinal pill that could be used to increase one’s strength. Thus, it was a little more difficult to refine compared to an ordinary tier five medicinal pill. Forget about Hao Xian, even Xiao Yan felt that it was a little troublesome to refine this kind of medicinal pill. He did not expect that this Elder Hao would actually choose such a difficult test question. It was likely that the people who could refine a medicinal pill of this tier were as rare as a phoenix feather and unicorn horn even in the entire Alchemist Department.

Elder Hao smiled faintly. He ignored the expression of the two people and pulled open the scroll. After which, he read out some of the introduction on the tier of the ‘Dragon Strength Pill’ as well as some brief information on it.

The eyes of everyone in the stadium involuntarily glowed when they heard that this medicinal pill actually possessed the ability to increase one’s strength. They quietly spoke in their hearts. This was indeed worthy of being a tier five medicinal pill. It actually had such a unique effect.

“This old fellow, is he actually here to ensure fairness or here to create trouble? He is actually asking two people of the younger generation to refine a tier five medicinal pill...” Some of the Elders in the stadium, who had come to watch the competition, involuntarily muttered quietly when they heard the test question for the competition.

“Since the both of you already know of the test question for the competition, please go ahead.” Elder Hao stored the scroll properly and waved his hand. A wild wind swept past two black cloths within the arena, which were sent flying. They revealed two stone tables under them as well as various medicinal ingredients placed on them.

“Three sets of medicinal ingredients have been prepared for each of you. Hence, each of you has three chances. Within these three chances, whoever manages to successfully refine the pill first will be the victor.”

Elder Hao slowly spoke. He pointed at the stone platform and said.

“What if the both of us fail? Don’t tell me we will end up in a draw?” Han Xian knit his brows slightly when he heard this. He also did not have much confidence in this so called ‘Dragon Strength Pill.’ However, if he failed in the refinement, would it not be the case where he and Xiao Yan would be at the same level? This was undoubtedly a little unfair toward him. Although that was merely his own assumption...

“If the both of you fails to successfully refine it, there would at least be the failed product right? From that, we can also discern some clues about both parties skills.” Elder Hao said. As he had great interest in refining skills, he was also extremely clear about the steps of refining medicine.

Han Xian only sighed in relief when he heard Elder Hao saying this. He believed that even if he was unable to refine a true pill, his failed product would definitely be more outstanding than that of Xiao Yan’s.

“Xiao Yan, do you have any objections?” Elder Hao asked Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan smiled and shook his head. He turned his head and glanced at Han Xian. He could see a faint cold smile from the latter’s eyes. Immediately, he lifted his eyebrows slightly, turned his body toward the stone table in the arena and walked over.

Behind him, Han Xian bowed slightly and handsomely toward the entire stadium before he turned around and walked to the other stone table. When he passed by Xiao Yan, he paused his footsteps and softly spoke with a smile, “Brat who is pretending to be calm. I await your failure.”

“Likewise.” Xiao Yan smiled and stepped behind a stone table.

Xiao Yan’s calmness caused the cold smile on Han Xian’s face to become a little denser. He curled his mouth and did not continue speaking. His body flashed behind a stone table.

Seeing that both parties were prepared, the smile on Elder Hao’s face also became much richer. He turned his body around, faced the black masses in the stadium as his clear voice reverberated throughout the stadium.

“The match will now begin!”

Credits

Translator: [Goodguyperson](#)

Epub: [Estevam](#) / [dotNOVEL](#)